



PS3
PlayStation 3

PSP
PlayStation Portable

PlayStation 2

PlayStation Network

PlayStation®

Official Magazine - Australia

AUGUST ISSUE 2010
100% Australian Content

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DEUS EX: HUMAN REVOLUTION

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VIDEOGAMES VS MORALITY: WHY WE LIKE BEING A BAD GUY



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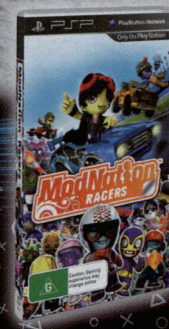
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INFOCUS

Hot new shots of Rockstar's upcoming period blockbuster developed down under! Page 14

INSIDER

8 NEWS

All the latest info!

10 SCREENTEST

Plus Separated at Birth and FacePalm!

12 TOP 10

Sports that ought to be games!

16 AROUND THE WORLD

What's making headlines?

18 PREORDERS

Want the best deals? Look here

21 RELEASE SCHEDULE

Plus local charts!

22 OPINION

Sound off!

34

GRAN TURISMO 5

The return of the king



"I do want to put as many Holden cars and other Australian models into the game as possible"

KAZUNORI YAMAUCHI, CEO, POLYPHONY DIGITAL

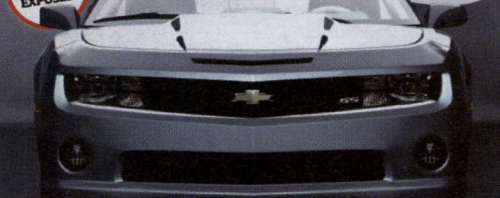
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VIDEOGAMES VS MORALITY: WHY WE LIKE BEING A BAD GUY

ON THE COVER

34 GRAN TURISMO 5

Is it the most ambitious game ever made?

40 IN COLD BLOOD

Why our morals go wayward when we play videogames

44 E3 EXPLOSION

The top 40 games to watch out of E3 2010!

48 DEUS EX

The most exciting prospect to come out of E3 2010?

56 NFS HOT PURSUIT

The best Need for Speed offshoot ever is resurrected!

REGULARS

8 INSIDER

News, comedy and opinion

30 INBOX

Your letters answered

80 INTERNET

Online reviews, DLC round up

84 INSIGHT

Essential tips & tricks

86 INTERMISSION

Blu-ray, DVD, PSN, cinema

90 INDEX

Your ultimate buyer's guide

96 INFAMOUS

Classics unearthed!

97 INSANE

It should be a game!



IN COLD BLOOD

Feature: Why do we get off being so very bad in videogames? We talk to the experts. Page 40

INREVIEW



68 MGS: PEACE WALKER

It's one of the best PSP games available! Read why you need this Snake in your pants!



72 ALPHA PROTOCOL

Live and let spy in Sega's espionage RPG. But should they be denying all knowledge of it?



73 BLUR

It's fast, but is it a little too furious? Read our thoughts here.



74 NAUGHTY BEAR

What happens when you cross *Manhunt* with *Play School*? Something like this.



75 GREEN DAY: ROCK BAND

Don't want to be an American idiot? Maybe you best move on then.



75 LEGO HARRY POTTER: YEARS 1-4

Build a better Hogwarts! Out of coloured plastic bricks, of course.



76 DEMON'S SOULS

This is possibly the hardest game we've ever played. Masochists, take note.



77 WORLD OF OUTLAWS

Do these mudslingers go out in a blaze of glory, or are we just going around in circles?



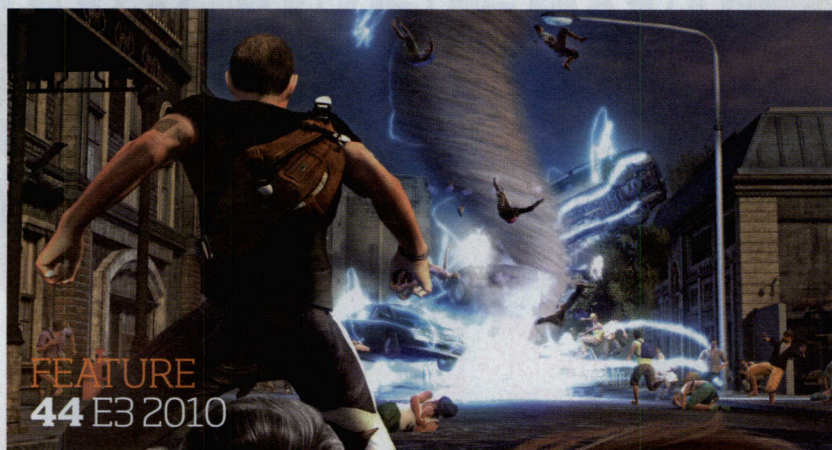
77 TOY STORY 3

That's MISTER Potato Head to you, you backstabbing murderer!



78 CLASH OF THE TITANS

Can this dusty old relic of a game compete with the likes of *God of War III*?



FEATURE
44 E3 2010



28 WIN!

10x NAUGHTY BEAR

3x METAL GEAR SOLID: PEACE WALKER AND LIMITED EDITION W-SERIES WALKMAN



Take a
walk on the
unwired side

MGS: PEACE WALKER

68

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Little Big Planet: G (Gaming Experience May Change Online), 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa: G, Gran Turismo: G, Grand Theft Auto Vice City Stories: MA (Strong Violence, Strong Coarse Language, Strong Drug Use, Sexual References), Assassin's Creed Bloodlines: MA (Strong Violence), MotorStorm Arctic Edge: PG (Mild Violence), Need for Speed Shift: G, Avatar The Game: M (Violence), Wipeout Pure: G, Pursuit Force Extreme Justice: M (Moderate Violence)

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SHOUT OUTS: KJR :: Vinnie :: Nicole :: Luke Mathew (who just said "Dad") :: Lucy :: MJ :: Mackie Manor :: Dika :: Z-Con



LUKE REILLY
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PSN:

Capt_Flashheart



PLAYING:

RED DEAD
REDEMPTION



WANTING:

DRIVER: SAN
FRANCISCO

WELCOME!

EA CEO John Riccitiello had billed E3 2010 as set to be the "biggest and best ever". Now that it's wrapped up I'd hesitate to completely agree with his prediction - but it made us think.

In the scheme of things, E3 2010 was certainly exciting. There were a host of games revealed and showcased that look absolutely stunning. *Gran Turismo 5*, *Driver: San Francisco*, *Homefront*, *Rock Band 3* and *Deus Ex: Human Revolution* were among my personal favourites. Earlier this week, sitting around the office, we came to conclusion there were more

games at E3 this year that looked good than looked bad. That might be a first.

With games becoming increasingly costly it's likely this trend of quality over quantity will continue (at least with big, expensive console releases - perhaps not indie, PSN-style games). The budget of *Gran Turismo 5* is apparently over 50 times the size of the budget of the original, all thanks to increased cost due to the extra work and resources needed to exploit more powerful tech. Few companies will drop 50 times what they used to drop a decade ago to make an awful game. The ones that keep doing so will perish.

No. Awful games are going to get shut down.

Unfortunately, like the death penalty, this mindset is invariably going to take some innocent victims along with it. Games we'll never, ever hear about - let alone play - that may have gone on to move squillions of copies but were killed off early in development.

For the most part though, I think the average quality of games will continue to improve. E3 2010 may have been the first real evidence of that.

Ula Reilly

OPS ON: FAVOURITE E3 2010 GAME



STEPHANIE GOH

ART DIRECTOR

Assassin's Creed Brotherhood looks amazing. I like being sneaky - in a game - and taking out chumps unawares - in a game.

PSN: TBA

PLAYING:

Naughty Bear

WANTING:

LittleBigPlanet 2



PAUL TAYLOR

DEPUTY EDITOR

Deus Ex. The only thing that could make this even more lustworthy is an HD version of *Invisible War*, one of the best games you've never played.

PSN: paulgusta

PLAYING:

Metal Gear: Peace Walker

WANTING:

Vanquish



ADAM MATHEW

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Medal of Honor. I won some sunnies that are exactly like the ones the bearded protagonist wears. Watch as I grow my beard as long as his.

PSN: YoumumsAWESOME

PLAYING:

Split/Second

WANTING:

Trophy Whore: The Game



JAMES COTTEE

CONTRIBUTOR

Scott Pilgrim vs. The World came out of left field to bring the cult comic book to life. Its quirky take on *Final Fight*-style gameplay looks rad.

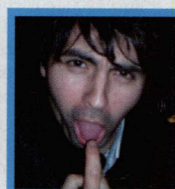
PSN: DrWho3987

PLAYING:

Solid: Peace Walker

WANTING:

Portal 2



JAMES ELLIS

CONTRIBUTOR

Deus Ex romped it home faster than a nano-augmented Usain Bolt fleeing a screening of *Battlefield Earth*. I'm already playing this in spirit.

PSN: gtfaster49

PLAYING:

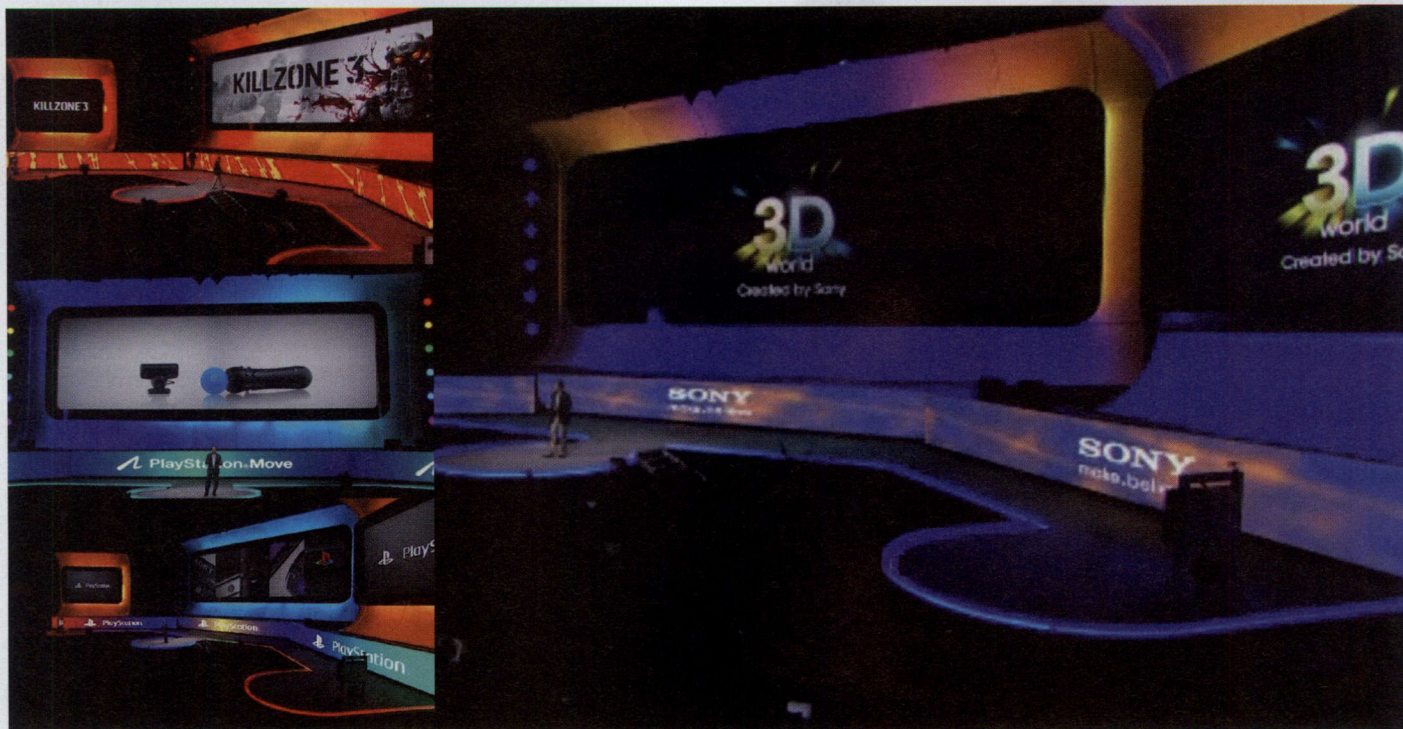
Super Street Fighter IV

WANTING:

Deus Ex: Human Revolution



12 TOP TEN
Which wacky sports should be turned into wacky videogames?



IN LALA LAND

SONY CONFERENCE E3 2010

A truly Moving experience

This year's Sony press conference was jam-packed with two hours worth of pants-wetting announcements and eyeball-searing on-stage demonstrations. The large majority of these featured PlayStation Move enabled games, including *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 11*, *Lord of the Rings: Aragorn's Quest* and *SingStar Dance* among a plethora of others.

It was also revealed that PlayStation Move will release in Europe on September 15, USA on September 19 and October 21 in Japan. Australia gets it on September 16 and the Aussie price point for the PlayStation Move 'motion' controller will be \$69.99 AUD

(or \$79.99 in New Zealand dollars) and a PlayStation Move 'navigation' controller will go for \$49.99 AUD (or \$59.99 NZ).

So you're looking at about \$119.98 for a full Move set-up, assuming you already own the PlayStation Eye camera – which you most likely don't have. Sony will be announcing 'starter bundle' prices closer to launch.

Speaking of departing with your hard earned, PlayStation Plus was also detailed as the new premium service for the PS3. For US\$50 a year (Aussie prices on page 80) you can get exclusive content, priority on betas (the very first being *Assassin's Creed Brotherhood*), early

demos, PSN games, discounted PSN prices and themed Minis.

Things wrapped up with a definite 'up yours' to the competition too. It was announced that the PS3 is securing exclusive content for *Medal of Honor* (comes with a HD remastered version of *Medal of Honor: Frontline* – the best MOH ever), *Dead Space 2* (features a Move-compatible version of *Dead Space Extraction*) and Valve's Gabe Newell not only confirmed *Portal 2* on PS3 – he admitted it is going to be the optimal console version of it. Bam.

KEV TELLS IT LIKE IT IS

The most entertaining parts of the Sony conference were delivered by Kevin Butler, the fake Sony executive hilariously portrayed by comic actor Jerry Lambert.

In case you're not familiar with his antics, Kevin has become a bit of a phenomenon since he was introduced as the face of Sony's "It Only Does Everything" campaign. The goofy Vice President has been an instant hit in the US and his company title constantly changes with the products he is explaining.

He's been 'Chief Weaponologist' for *Ratchet & Clank*, the 'VP of Blu-ray Superiority', the 'VP of First-Person Shooter Relations' for MAG, the

'Regional Manager of War' for *God of War III*, the 'VP of Apologetic Apologies' and he was even the 'VP of Fanboy Relations' at one stage.

Along with some delicious cheapshots aimed squarely at the competition, Kevin delivered an inspiring and comical salute to gaming culture.

The man was the obvious standout in the two hour presentation. He was funny, his comic timing was spot-on and his message extolling the love of gaming was over-the-top, but carried a sentiment that is too often overlooked or forgotten in these kinds of presentations: a righteous love of videogaming.

Keep it comin', Kev.





14 IN FOCUS
We take a time machine back to see what L.A. Noire looked like in L.A. Noire



16 AROUND THE WORLD IN PS3
We head abroad for all that's odd.



24 ANGRY SACKBOY
He's got the sack to say whatever he wants. Do you?

HOME ON THE RANGE

YOU CHEATIN' SON OF A GLITCH

First we had the cougar man and the donkey lady, unnatural abominations that blemished our favourite Western title. Now it seems that online fans of *Red Dead Redemption* have located a gaping hole in the multiplayer XP system that is the size of Texas.

At the time of writing we could travel to any of the Gang Hideouts scattered across the map and none of the enemies would spawn. We were, however, greeted with a 'Hideout Complete' message and got awarded with a nominal amount of XP (500 with expert aiming



turned on) for doing so, all in a matter of seconds.

Ranking to Level 50 is a breeze using this method and we can only hope it's fixed before you read this.



MASTER OF PUPPETS

There's nothing like letting loose to a head-bangin', crank-it-up, rock 'n roll tune. The upcoming release of *Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock* should see to that.

Warriors of Rock will hit stores in September and has returned to its roots – rock – with a big name setlist including Muse, KISS, Queen and Black Sabbath. All

songs have been chosen based on guitar playability.

The real news, however, is you preorder *Warriors of Rock* in early August you could score yourself a double pass to see Metallica when their World Magnetic Tour arrives down under! Seeing those tickets sold out in about five seconds, this could be your last chance.

IN SHORT...

Things that we found conspicuously absent from E3: Rockstar's *Agent*, *The Last Guardian* and any word about a possible *Resistance 3* sequel. Will these games be shown at Gamescom 2010?



Keep an eye out on PSN for *DeathSpank*, an upcoming action role-playing game by game designer Ron Gilbert. This fantastic title is best described as "Monkey Island meets *Diablo*".



Four months away from its release, *Assassin's Creed Brotherhood's* technical director, Mathieu Gagnon, has said. "There are absolutely no plans for DLC at this time". An interesting admission, no?



WHAT'S HOT OR NOT

Too hot to handle? Or too cold to hold?



Deus Ex
So hot. Want to touch the heiny. Arooo

Activision's E3 Party
Usher, Eminem, Jane's Addiction, Chris Cornell...



Booth babes
Talk to girls or play games? Tough decision

Portal 2
GLaDOS is back again and just as hilarious



LA riots ahoy!
Staying two mins from LA Lakers riots



Yer Al-Qaeda lookin'
We get hassled by US immigration



The Fight on Move
Felt limp-wristed. Please fix



FACEPALM

Status updates from the digital elite



John Marston just skinned myself a rabbit and sold it for \$2. Yeah. I – am – awesome.

Today 6:23am • Comment • Like



Bonnie MacFarlane That poor rabbit! How could you shoot an innocent little bunny? Shouldn't you be picking flowers instead?

6 hours ago • Report



John Marston Oh come on, Ms. MacFarlane. I've killed 930 people to date, why is this one little rabbit so important to you?

5 hours ago • Report



RSPCA Boy You're a murderer Mister Marston which is, like, really heavy. How can you even sleep at night, man?

5 hours ago • Report



John Marston Guilty as charged, sir. Hell, I killed a fella this morning because he pronounced it "supposably". Sleeping at night is rarely a problem, I can pitch a tent anywhere (as long as there's flat ground away from town).

2 hours ago • Report



Seth Briars I can pitch a tent anywhere too, as long as 'anywhere' is an open grave and I have access to some smelling salts and a heater.

2 hours ago • Report



Bonnie MacFarlane Good God in heaven. I think I'm gonna be sick...

2 hours ago • Report



Nigel West Dickens Illness is it? Say no more, say no more! I could see immediately from your profile pic that you're suffering from acute discombobulation of the epidermis. Luckily for you, it's treatable if caught early.

2 hours ago • Report



Bonnie MacFarlane What?! Really...? I have been feeling under the weather a bit lately.

2 hours ago • Report



Nigel West Dickens I'm not surprised at all, my dear. You show all the classic symptoms. Fortunately I sell an elixir that will re-comboblute you. If I could just get your credit card details...

2 hours ago • Report



Bonnie MacFarlane Sure, thing – I'll give you my roomates, it's 1234 1234 1234 1234 and the name on the card is 'GOANNE F. URSELF'.

2 minutes ago • Report



Seth Briars Oh, hey, Bonnie. Let me know your expiry date too. I only like 'em expired. Get it? Because of the dead thing. Yeah.

1 minute ago • Report

SCREENTEST

Your favourite games as movies

KILLZONE

Planets change. War doesn't



The Director

Steven Spielberg

The Plot

In the time of space colonisation, there are two factions at war – the I.S.A. (Interplanetary Strategic Alliance) and the Helghast. After the defensive systems guarding the I.S.A. planet Vekta fail to blow a sudden wave of attacking Helghan ships to bits, they land on the planet, killing everyone in they way as they wreak havoc on the outnumbered I.S.A. Enter Captain Jan Templar, the guy that's got it where it counts. With the Staff Sergeant Rico Velazquez and Shadow Marshal Luger, they are sent into to rescue Colonel Hakha, and restore the planetary defensive systems before they lose control of the entire planet.

The Pitch

Take *Saving Private Ryan*, switch Earth with Vekta and replace the Nazis with Helghast, add a little touch of *Apocalypse Now*. Dust with snow for good measure.

Green Light or Development Hell?

Green like the grass on the other side of the fence, given a little work. Flesh out the story just so that it's not a two-hour film of people shooting and stuff dying (we're looking at you *Doom*). The beach landing scene in *Saving Private Ryan* is one of the most gruesome and amazing in a movie to date – this with a *Killzone* touch would just, to say the least, work brilliantly. Plus, you've got a ready-made franchise in waiting. There's already been one sequel and there's another one in the wings. What part of this isn't a good idea? There's not enough gritty sci-fi like *Killzone*.

Best Line:

Colonel Hakha: Given time, even a monkey can write Shakespeare.

Sergeant Rico: What the f--k is a Shakespeare?

The Cast:

Josh Duhamel as the captain, Jan Templar

Kristen Bell as special-ops assassin, Luger.

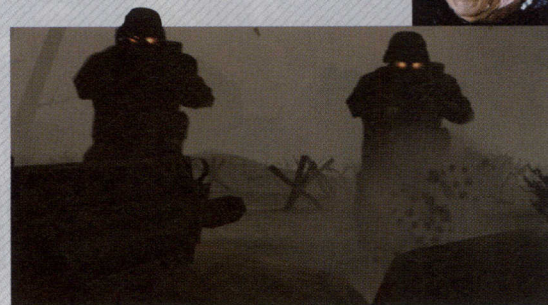
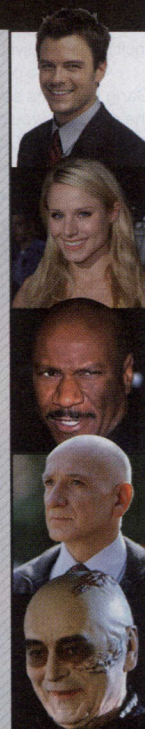
Ving Rhames as the Helghast-hating swear-machine Rico.

Ben Kingsley as Gregor Hakha, a half-human, half-Helghast spy.

Zombie Sebastian Shaw as crazy evil Sclar Visari. He knows bad – he played Darth Vader. Unfortunately he died in 1994.

“Given time, even a monkey can write Shakespeare”

COLONEL HAKHA



OFF THE CHARTS

SingStar packshots featuring douchebags wearing sunglasses indoors (below):



SingStar packshots featuring no sunglasses (below):

SEPARATED AT BIRTH!



NO. 18 William B. Davis and *Half-Life*'s mystery dude, G-Man

You might not recognise the name, or initially place the dude in the stripy tie without his trademark cancer stick in hand. Davis played the equally mysterious 'The Smoking Man' on *The X-Files*. Both The Smoking Man and G-Man are tied up with aliens and can deliver their lines deadpan. They both have the same last name. Plus, we reckon he must have the best poker face this side of Clint Eastwood.

IN ALCHEMY, ALL MUST OBEY THE
LAW OF EQUIVALENT EXCHANGE...

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST BROTHERHOOD

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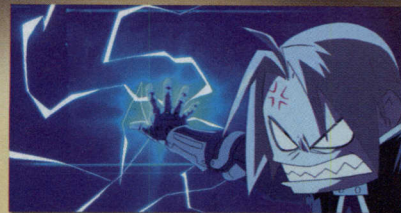
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- OTAKU USA

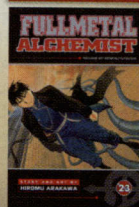


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TOP 10

SPORTS THAT NEED TO
BECOME A VIDEOGAME

Sports and videogames go together like banana and bacon: two things you'd think would clash but in fact make a glorious combination. Here are 10 sports we feel definitely deserve some digital representation

2

ROLLER DERBY

Think of this as *Burnout*, but on roller-skates. The point is for one skater on each team to pass members of the opposition as they race around a circuit. Toss in specialised moves such as booty blocks and hip checks, and this full-contact sport is screaming for a disc-based release. Hell, you could even call it *Whip It! The Videogame*.



3

CROQUET

So it's relying more on gimmicky retro niche appeal than widespread acceptance, kind of like how lawn bowls become cool for twentysomethings. Still, croquet does what pool and golf do so well: satisfying a basic human desire to hit balls through and into holes with a wooden stick. A perfect videogame as you don't need a perfect lawn to play it on.



5

HORNUSSEN

Take one bendy rod with a wooden club on the end, and launch a puck from a gently curved ramp by giving it a good smack. Your opponents, a few hundred metres away, have to knock it out of the air with wooden pallets. And keep their teeth as a rubber puck rockets toward their unguarded flesh. This is a perfect candidate for the PlayStation Move.



6

COMPETITIVE EATING

Picture a mix between some button mashing mayhem and context sensitive actions. If you're choking, you perform you're Heimlich manoeuvre by hitting the controller against your stomach. It would come with its own fully-fledged story about honour and glory, getting revenge on the guy who killed your father with some bad potato wedges.



8

MARCHING BAND

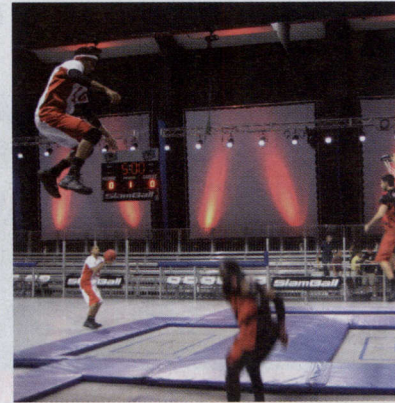
A rhythm music game that's also part RPG. You get to build your team from the ground up and you'd use a snare drum, plus wear a tall, stripy hat so everyone knows just who's in charge – and who to blame when the formation turns from being a beautiful flower into the shape of the Devil's buttocks. Music is a sport when you play it on a football field, right?



9

SLAMBALL

Like basketball, but with trampolines, tackling and extra points for slam dunks. We'd like to see a punch and insult buttons, as well as some serious crash tackling. For the slamming, we're thinking of some special padding for the controller so you can smash the hell out of the thing against the ground for an ultra dunk. Works well when you're angry too!



1

SHIN KICKING

UFC? For weaklings. Boxing? For chumps. Real men go in for the esteemed sport of shin kicking. Part wrestling, part soccer, the point is to literally kick seven shades out of your opponent's shins on sheep-turd strewn lawns until he falls to the ground. Then, wait for the next guy, rinse and repeat. Expect steel-capped boots as DLC.





4

UNICYCLE HOCKEY

We love it when two incongruous nouns are mashed together, making something awesome you didn't even know you wanted. It takes the character-defining violence of roller hockey (ice hockey minus the ice) and the extreme comedy of unicycles. We wager it would probably make a better videogame than an actual game.



7

EXTREME IRONING

Visualise yourself, harnessing the full power of the PlayStation Move motion controller to emulate the full grunt of the motion of ironing – while you sky dive, scuba and wrestle a cheetah. You need to become the ironing world champ by doing it everywhere, travelling the globe in search of the craziest spots. If it doesn't get released on PS3, there's always Steam.



10

POLO

We're not talking about that top your grandma made a few Christmases ago: we're talking full-on polo, with horses, the ball and the little hoops. Thanks to *Red Dead Redemption* everyone loves horses now – it's equestri-mania. Guest characters include the British royal family. Unlockable bastardised versions of polo include replacing ponies with motorcycles and elephants.



INITIAL D 頭文字D

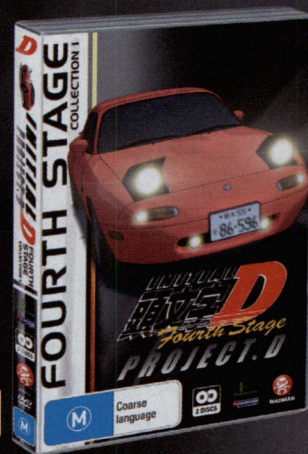
DRIFT. DRIVE. **REVIVED!**

Anyone can drive fast.

Only one driver can be the fastest.

Nerve, skill, and the right car...

Takumi has all three!



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MADMAN.COM.AU

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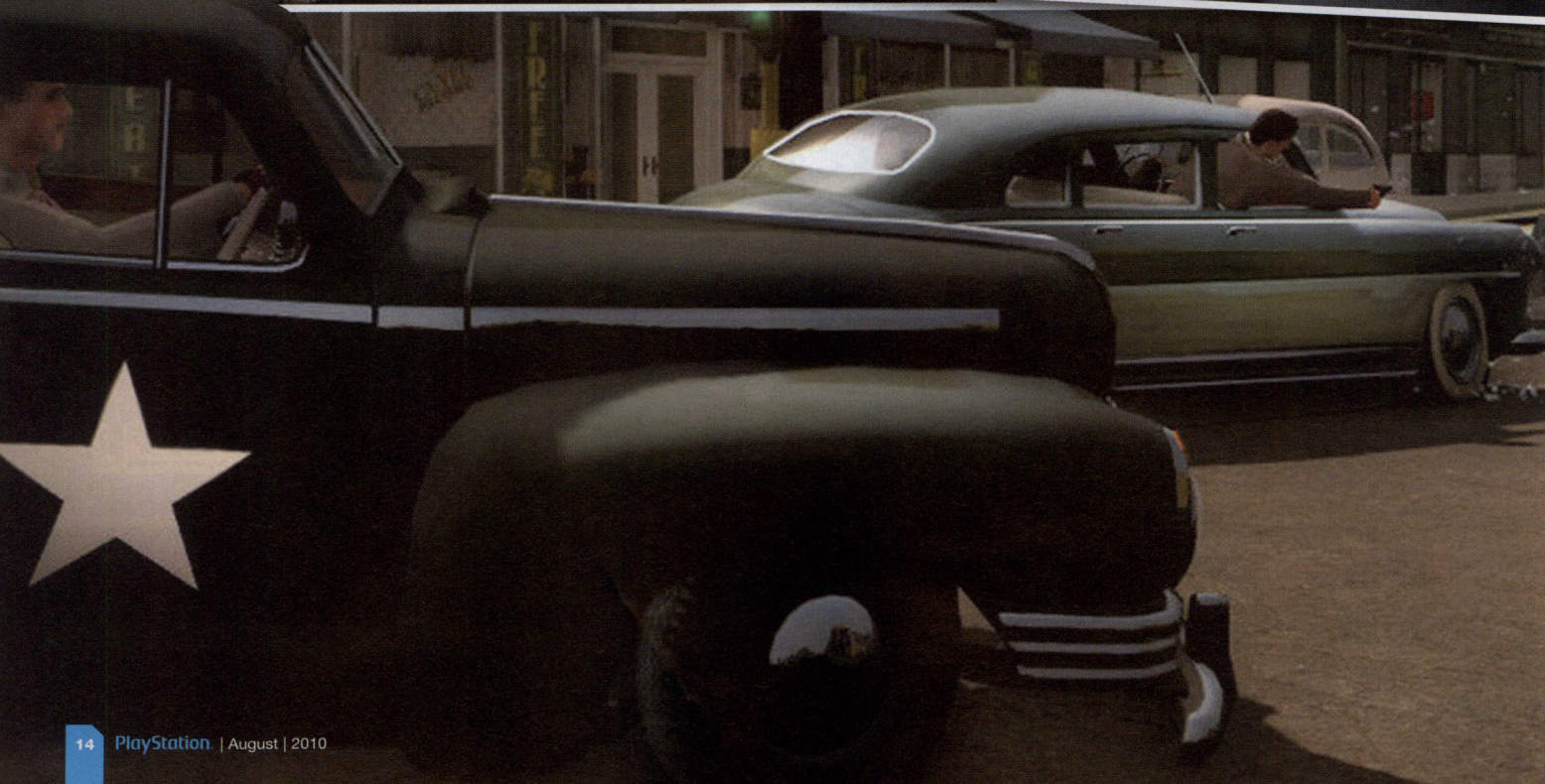
INFOCUS

L.A. NOIRE

Rockstar does not have a presence at E3, but take a look at this most recent batch of *L.A. Noire* screens we've got hold of.

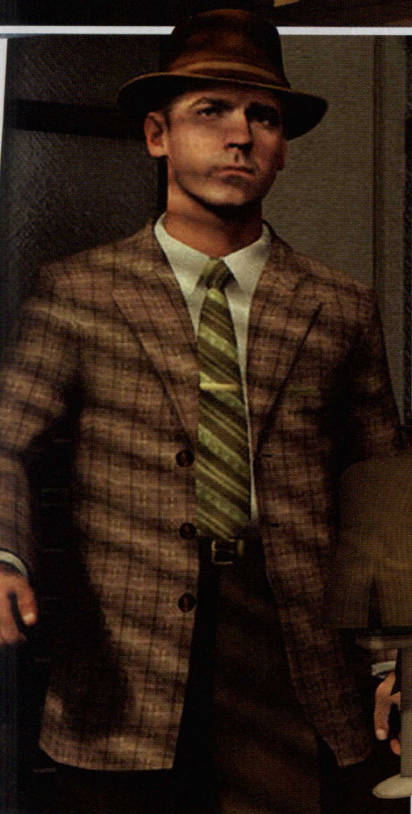


“What are you, 12? Did you find that badge in a packet of Coco Pops?”





“You want to talk about length? *L.A. Noire* has **over 20 hours of voice acting** alone”



It's an open-world game, but there'll be swags of detailed interiors



“You should be on brain detail. I'm washin' windows”

AROUND THE WORLD **IN PS3**

OPS trawls high and low for what's going on around the globe in gaming

OHIO, USA
WIPEOUT

As if from a scene from *Pursuit Force*, 24-year-old Brandon Farmer jumped on top of a semi-trailer for a dare, intending to then jump off at the next set of traffic lights. Problem was, he missed a time to jump. Fortunately he was able to call the police, who managed to pull the truck over. After 16km. Apparently he told the phone operator he was "hanging on for dear life." Unsurprisingly, he'd been drinking at the time.



WASHINGTON DC, USA
SOLDIER ON

The United States Army is going to button it – literally – as Velcro is about to be phased out of use on uniforms. Apparently, dirt and debris gets too easily stuck and it makes it hard for the soldiers to use their uniforms properly – as in, not being naked on the battlefield. Perhaps we'll see reference in shooters: along with 'tango down!' and the ubiquitous 'stay frosty', expect harsh-but-fair leader to bark 'button it!'



LONDON, ENGLAND
TAX BROKE

Proposed tax breaks for UK developers have been shelved, as Chancellor George Osborne called the old Labor government's plans to provide incentive for developing games by lowering tax "poorly targeted", instead opting for broader cuts. TIGA CEO Richard Wilson said that unless a scheme can be implemented that aids devs, "jobs will be lost and [the UK] will cease to be a leading developer of video games."



SHANGHAI, CHINA
DEAD RED GAMING

Reports from the Xinhua News Agency, regulations are about to be put in place to 'protect' minors from becoming addicted to online games as well as inappropriate content. From August 1, games designed for minors encouraging "imitation of behavior that violates social morals and the law" will be quashed, and developers were told to techniques that would "limit the gaming time of minors in order to prevent addiction".



CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA
PREACHING TO THE CHOIR

"I think that the best way to handle this is to accept that our current classification system is broken." So says Opposition leader Tony Abbott at the recent Make It Count debate, when answering a question about sexualisation of children in media. Tony, we know – and we've been trying to get the system fixed. However, this acknowledgement doesn't indicate that he would be able to make a change if elected.



INTERNATIONAL CHARTS



UK

Source: ELSPA

- 1 Red Dead Redemption Rockstar
- 2 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa EA
- 3 Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands Ubisoft
- 4 International Cricket 2010 Codemasters
- 5 Blur Activision
- 6 UFC Undisputed 2010 THQ
- 7 Battlefield: Bad Company 2 EA
- 8 ModNation Racers Sony
- 9 Split/Second Disney
- 10 Modern Warfare 2 Activision



JAPAN

Source: VGCHARTZ

- 1 GTA: Episodes from Liberty City Take Two
- 2 World Soccer Winning Eleven 2010 Konami
- 3 Just Cause 2 Square Enix
- 4 Lost Planet 2 Capcom
- 5 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa EA
- 6 Super Street Fighter IV Capcom
- 7 NieR RepliCant Square Enix
- 8 Demon's Souls Sony
- 9 The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion Bethesda
- 10 Pro Yakyuu Spirits 2010 Konami



USA

Source: NPD

- 1 Red Dead Redemption Rockstar
- 2 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 11 EA
- 3 God of War III Sony
- 4 Green Day: Rock Band MTV Games
- 5 UFC Undisputed 2010 THQ
- 6 Super Street Fighter IV Capcom
- 7 Modern Warfare 2 Activision
- 8 3D Dot Game Heroes Atlas
- 9 Assassin's Creed II Ubisoft
- 10 Uncharted 2: Among Thieves Sony



SINGULARITY™

PRE-ORDER PARADISE

The hottest deals, the coolest stuff – what are you waiting for?

DRIVER: SAN FRANCISCO

Tanner's back. Take to the streets of San Francisco in the hunt for Jericho, your arch villain, in over 100 different cars. Using a unique 'shift' feature, *Driver: San Francisco* promises to be the ultimate car chase game, with the iconic city as your playground for action. Plus, you can replay your chase and turn it into a movie-quality clip by putting the camera where you want it in the Director Mode.

GAME \$129.95

Estimated Dispatch Date: 30 October 2010

Special Offer: *Driver* fuzzy dice

EB GAMES \$128

Estimated Dispatch Date: TBA 2010

Collector's Edition includes:

1970 Dodge Challenger Hemi R/T replica

Map of San Francisco

Two in-game vehicles

Extra challenge stage



MAFIA II

Prepare to be transported into the dark and unforgiving world of the Mafia. Embellished by era-evoking atmosphere replicates the clothing, cars, music and advertising of 1940s and 1950s Americana, you'll be immersed in the game's cinematic Hollywood-style experience with strong characters in a living, breathing metropolis. It's shaping up to be the most compelling Mafia title to date.

Special Edition includes:

- Collectible SteelBook casing
- Made Man pack
- Hardcover art book
- *Mafia II* orchestral soundtrack
- Map of Empire Bay

EB GAMES \$128

Special offer: Vegas Pack DLC

Estimated dispatch date:

27/08/2010

JB HIFI \$129

Special offer: Greaser Pack DLC

Estimated dispatch date:

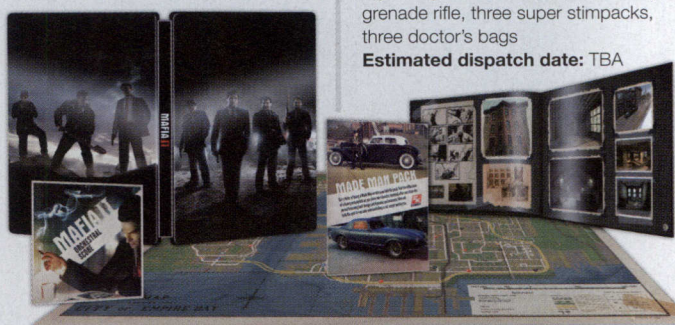
27/08/2010

GAME \$129 (and Mighty Ape New Zealand – DLC only)

Special offer: Renegade Pack DLC

Estimated dispatch date:

27/08/2010



FALLOUT NEW VEGAS

As you battle your way across the heat-blasted Mojave Wasteland, the colossal Hoover Dam, and the neon drenched Vegas Strip, you'll be introduced to a colourful cast of characters, special weapons, mutants and much more.

GAME: \$144

Lightweight leather armour, sturdy caravan shotgun, four repair kits, binoculars

Estimated dispatch date:

31/10/2010

EB GAMES: \$148

Armoured Vault 13 suit, weathered 10mm pistol, Vault 13 canteen, five stimpacks

Estimated dispatch date:

22/10/2010

JB HIFI: \$149

Lightweight metal armour, mercenary grenade rifle, three super stimpacks, three doctor's bags

Estimated dispatch date: TBA

ASSASSIN'S CREED BROTHERHOOD

Ezio, a legendary Master Assassin, must journey into Rome, centre of power, greed and corruption to strike at the heart of his enemy. Defeating the corrupt tyrants entrenched there will require not only strength, but also leadership, as Ezio commands an entire brotherhood who will rally to his side. Also includes a multiplayer mode so you can match your skills against other players online.

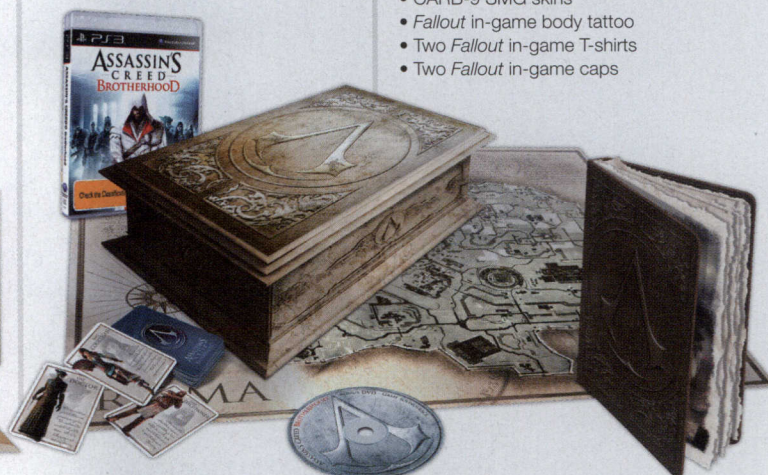
Collector's Edition includes:

- Renaissance collector chest
- Map of Rome
- Exclusive codex
- Bonus DVD and game soundtrack
- Multiplayer character cards
- Two exclusive single-player levels DLC
- Unlock two multiplayer characters DLC
- Additional bonus to be discovered

EB GAMES: \$148

Estimated dispatch date:

18/11/2010



BRINK

A man-made floating city called the Ark is on the brink of all-out civil war. Originally built as an experimental self-sufficient and 100% "green" habitat, the Ark has become a refuge for humanity. Crammed with the original founders, their descendants, as well as tens of thousands of refugees, the Ark exists in total isolation from the rest of the world. With 25 years of social unrest, the inhabitants of the Ark have reached their breaking point. It's up to you to decide the future of the Ark and the human race.

GAME: \$89 (web only price)

Estimated dispatch date: 30/09/2010

Pre order and receive:

- CARB-9 SMG skins
- *Fallout* in-game body tattoo
- Two *Fallout* in-game T-shirts
- Two *Fallout* in-game caps

ATTENTION PLEASE!

Ladies and gentlemen, step right up and take a look at the latest and greatest technology on the planet, the **TIME MANIPULATION DEVICE!**

It's so new and so surreptitious that the only people who know about it are the scientists on our hidden research facility on the island of Katorga-12 and you dear audience, the first people in the world to get to play with this amazing new piece of equipment. Derived from Einsteinium, the 99th element of the periodic table this is the must-own device of the 1950s and you would be missing out on one of the greatest adventures of your life if you were to walk away today without experiencing it in first-person. Just look at what the amazing **TMD** can do?

- It can **REVERT** time. That's right, this amazing device can rewind objects and humans to states they were in moments or even years before. Fix that broken staircase, de-evolve your enemies into primitive forms and more
- It can **AGE** an object in an instant. Can't get past a gate? Just age it into a pile of rust and step right over. Unhappy with the service at your local milk bar? Age that creep until he is nought but a pile of bones
- You can put objects into a state of **STASIS**. Let's say someone throws a grenade at you: unleash the stasis option of your brand new **TMD** and that object will freeze in time, allowing you to walk away unharmed. Also useful for picking up and manipulating heavy items
- It allows you to act on **IMPULSE**. Not happy with something in your immediate vicinity? The **TMD** can release a pulse of energy that will cause that annoyance to go flying off into the distance. You can even use this on people you don't like: very handy indeed
- And finally, perhaps the **TMD's** most extraordinary ability, **CHRONOLIGHT**. This phenomenal function allows you to peer directly through time and to see how a place looked in different eras. Amazing. And what's more, you can combine it with other functions like stasis to suck objects right into your own time period!



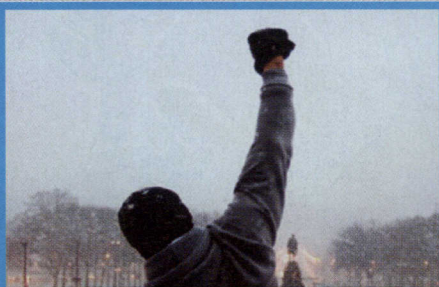
Folks, I don't want to alarm you, but there is a new threat to your way of life to which you absolutely, positively, undoubtedly must own a TMD to survive. It's called a Singularity. It's causing some parts of the planet to shift uncontrollably into the bizarre, shiny future world of 2010. It's also mutating flora, fauna and even human beings, turning them into vicious killers. So don't delay, pick yourself up a Time Manipulation Device today and **SURVIVE the SINGULARITY**

THIS MONTH

Your 30-day planner of games and goodness!

JUNE 24 TIM BURTON: THE EXHIBITION

In collaboration with the man himself, Melbourne's ACMI is showcasing tonnes of Tim Burton's work, from the excellent *Batman* to the quirky *Alice in Wonderland*, and everything in between. The show runs until October 10. Check out acmi.net.au for more info.



JUNE 30 **ROCKY I - V**

Four of the greatest films made and one lesser movie (looking at you, *Rocky IV*) are released on Blu-ray. "Whatever he hits, he destroys." "You're gonna eat lightning and you're gonna crap thunder!" – you know the lines. Buy them at billybluray.com.au



JULY 1 **THE KARATE KID**

Jaden Smith, 'Fresh Prince' Will's little 'un, plays the son of working single mother who is pressured to move to China. To fit in, he has to embrace the culture and kung fu, taught to him by Jackie Chan, who may or may not teach him to wax on or off.



JULY 15 **KNIGHT AND DAY**

Tom Cruise and Cameron Diaz star in this action comedy, where their glamorous yet deadly adventure has now made them the fugitive couple to be looking for. Expect shifting alliances, betrayal and some sort of race around the world.



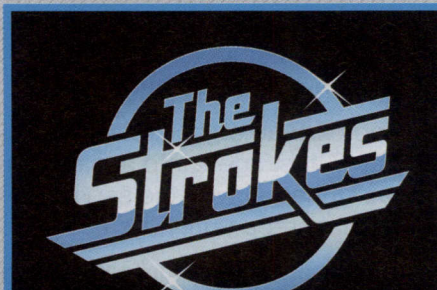
JULY 21 **GREEN ZONE**

Directed by Paul Greengrass and starring Matt Damon, this action-thriller set in Iraq at the start of the second Gulf War. If you loved Bourne you'll enjoy this. Buy it at billybluray.com.au



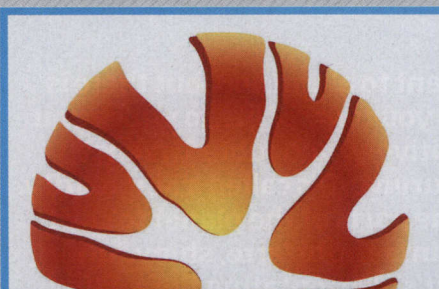
JULY 22 **INCEPTION**

Leonardo DiCaprio is Dom Cobb – a skilled thief who is able to steal valuable secrets from inside the subconscious of people during the dream state, but his ability has cost him everything he ever loved and has made him a fugitive.



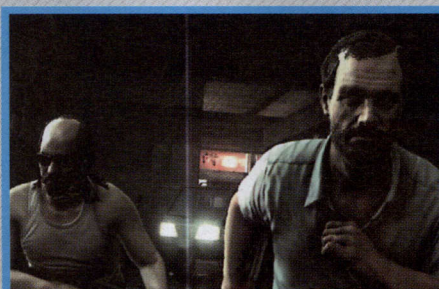
AUGUST 1 **SPLENDOUR IN THE GRASS**

US band The Strokes are headlining this year's four-day festival in Woodford, Queensland. Sound interesting? Go to splendourinthegrass.com for more info, and to wish that you'd thought ahead of time as tickets are all sold out.



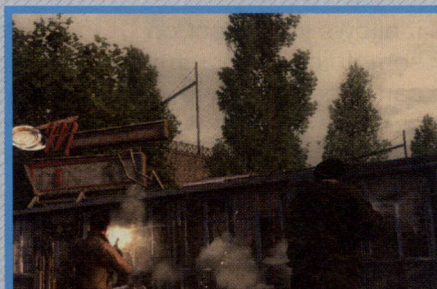
AUGUST 5 **HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE**

The first match of the first round kicks off tonight: Melbourne Heart versus Central Coast Mariners. 7.30pm at AAMI Park in Melbourne. Go to a-league.com.au for all upcoming matches and fixtures.



AUGUST 26 **KANE & LYNCH 2: DOG DAYS**

After a simple job goes wrong, Kane and Lynch find themselves wanted by the entire Shanghai underworld. They set off a chain-reaction of events that'll mean you'll probably end up killing a lot of people to get things back to normal.



AUGUST 27 **MAFIA II**

Set in the America during the 1940s and '50s, *Mafia II* takes players on a rollercoaster ride into Empire Bay's underbelly of vice and crime. With a strong emphasis on the clothing, cars and style of the period, it looks amazing.

RELEASE SCHEDULE

Coming soon to a store near you!

OUT NOW

LEGO Harry Potter

Genre: Family
Distributor: Warner Bros.

Naughty Bear

Genre: Action
Distributor: AIE

Singularity

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: Activision

Green Day: Rock Band

Genre: Music
Distributor: EA

Clash of the Titans

Genre: Action
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

Toy Story 3

Genre: Adventure
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

AUGUST

Kane & Lynch 2:

Dog Days
Genre: Action
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

Mafia II

Genre: Action
Distributor: 2K

Madden NFL 11

Genre: Sports
Distributor: EA

SEPTEMBER

Dead Rising 2

Genre: Action
Distributor: THQ

Formula 1 2010

Genre: Racing
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

Castlevania:

Lords of Shadow
Genre: Action
Distributor: Mindscape

R.U.S.E.

Genre: RTS
Distributor: Ubisoft

Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions

Genre: Action
Distributor: Activision

OCTOBER

Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood

Genre: Action
Distributor: Ubisoft

International

Cricket 2010
Genre: Sports
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

F.3.A.R.

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: Warner Bros.

Fallout: New Vegas

Genre: RPG
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

Splatterhouse

Genre: Action
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

Medal of Honor

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: EA

NOVEMBER

Call of Duty:

Black Ops
Genre: Shooter
Distributor: Activision

The Last Guardian

Genre: Adventure
Distributor: Sony

Gran Turismo 5

Genre: Racing
Distributor: Sony

Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit

Genre: Racing
Distributor: EA

TBA 2010

AFL 10

Genre: Sports
Distributor: Sony

Agent

Genre: Action
Distributor: Rockstar

Brink

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: Bethesda

Ghost Recon:

Future Soldier
Genre: Action
Distributor: Ubisoft

WRC

Genre: Racing
Distributor: AFA

L.A. Noire

Genre: Adventure
Distributor: Rockstar

Majin and the Forsaken Kingdom

Genre: Adventure
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

Max Payne 3

Genre: Action
Distributor: Rockstar

Test Drive

Unlimited 2
Genre: Racing
Distributor: Namco Bandai Partners

True Crime: Hong Kong

Genre: Action
Distributor: Activision

Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II

Genre: Action
Distributor: Activision

Homefront

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: THQ

Rock Band 3

Genre: Music
Distributor: EA

EA Sports MMA

Genre: Sports
Distributor: EA

Crysis 2

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: EA

Driver: San Francisco

Genre: Racing
Distributor: Ubisoft

SOCOM 4

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: Sony

Bulletstorm

Genre: Shooter
Distributor: EA

Vanquish

Genre: Action
Distributor: Sega

TBA 2011

Spec Ops: The Line

Genre: Action
Distributor: 2K

inFamous 2

Genre: Action
Distributor: Sony

Deus Ex: Human

Revolution
Genre: Action
Distributor: Ubisoft

RAGE

Genre: Action
Distributor: Bethesda

LOCAL CHARTS

1 Red Dead Redemption

Genre: Adventure Distributor: Sony

2 God of War III

Genre: Action Distributor: Sony

3 UFC 2010 Undisputed

Genre: Fighting Distributor: THQ

4 FIFA World Cup 2010

Genre: Sports Distributor: EA

5 ModNation Racers

Genre: Racing Distributor: Sony

6 Modern Warfare 2

Genre: Shooter Distributor: Activision

7 Super Street Fighter IV

Genre: Fighting Distributor: THQ

8 Skate 3

Genre: Sports Distributor: EA

9 GTA: Episodes from Liberty City

Genre: Action Distributor: Rockstar

10 Final Fantasy XIII

Genre: RPG Distributor: Ubisoft

“QUOTE UNQUOTE”

Industry chatter, inside tips and loose lips



“Sure, I'd like to make a first-person shooter.”

Square Enix's *Final Fantasy* and *Kingdom Hearts* designer, Tetsuya Nomura, muses about possible future projects. Nothing's confirmed.“[Steam's services] will make the PlayStation 3 version of *Portal 2* the best version on any console.”

Valve CEO Gabe Newell eats humble pie, and makes up with Sony. Gamers win.



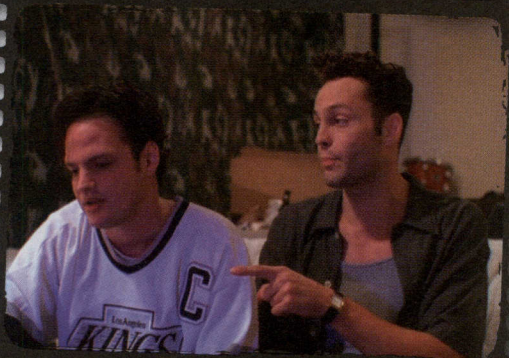
“There is a risk of developing a ‘Playstation’ mentality to killing.”

Philip Alston, UN Investigator, on the US Army's use of drones in overseas combat.



“I don't believe they were ever able to successfully close a deal between Mr. Kojima and Sony.”

David Hayter, voice actor for Solid Snake, on the cancellation of the *Metal Gear Solid* movie.



**“I miss the days when
multiplayer meant
splitscreen”**

OPINION

OLD SCHOOL



OFFICIAL
PLAYSTATION
JARED MALLIA

“Why won't you die?”, “This sucks hard, I'm lagging” and “Camper!” seem to be the only things that people scream out over their microphones while playing online games. People get genuinely pissed off with everyone else. We even get frustrated at ourselves – think all those times you were one-off a chopper in *Modern Warfare*. Online play is reducing us to a race of angry, angsty all-hat-no-cowboy smack-talkers.

Games are becoming less about storytelling and more about bloodsport. It's happening. Games are increasingly becoming more focused on their online aspects, like competitive multiplayer, than on their single-player portions. We need to face facts that games are in the process of a major shift towards more and more community-orientated features, and there's a quick buck to be made from post-release DLC.

I was playing *Red Dead Redemption* a couple a days prior to writing this. Granted, this isn't a great example of a lacking single-player experience. Rather, it's awesome. But as I was waiting for it to load, I glanced into the cupboard next to my TV. I didn't realise how many PS2 and PSone games I had. I paused *Red Dead*, took all the games out and had a look at what I'd spent my money on over the past eight years. From *Shadow of the Colossus* to *Dino Crisis*, from every *Crash Bandicoot* to *Metal Gear Solid* and the *Driver* games. These games are still good. Sure, the graphics doesn't compare and there aren't any 64-way multiplayer matches, but they still rocked.

I took *Red Dead* out and threw in *Dino Crisis*. I played some *Crash* next then some *Metal Gear*. I started to see a pattern emerging. Games were games back then. What you saw was what you got, nothing more nothing less. They were fun when I played them then, and they're still kick-arse today.

Think back to those times where you'd have your mates over and have to use that boomerang multitap and just go nuts with *Crash Team Racing*? Nowadays, it's a miracle when developers decide to even put in split-screen multiplayer.

What we, as gamers, are dealing with here is change on a large scale – a seismic shift towards a new future for gaming. We are being funneled into an online market in an effort to increase profits and I don't think this will be changing too soon. Two people, with two copies of a game, playing against each other online means *twice* as much money as two people playing one game around the same TV. Shoehorning multiplayer into your game will make you more coin than releasing a straight single-player title.

It's a fact.

Why can't I just buy a game and not have to worry about playing online, the constant updating/patching and leveling up to be better than some 12-year-old kid from Finland? Does all this malarkey really add to the experience of the game? After my little trip down memory lane, I'm starting to think that it isn't.

Don't get me wrong though; games today are really impressive. I just miss the days when the final product was the final product. Patches, extra levels: all that simply waited until the sequel. We enjoyed what we had rather than left our hands out for more. I miss the days when multiplayer meant splitscreen, and we shared TVs like bowls of Twisties.

So to all you developers out there, you can keep your DLC and your massive online matches. I still love my fat PS2 with the dodgy disc-tray.

Jared Mallia has been an intern at *OPS* for the past few months and is apparently older than he looks.

ANIME
IS ONLY
HALF
THE STORY

READ
WHERE
IT ALL
BEGAN...

MANGA!



MANGA (PRONOUNCED MAH-NGA): STORIES TOLD VISUALLY THROUGH SEQUENTIAL ART. OFTEN REFERS TO COMICS ORIGINATING IN JAPAN AND DRAWN IN BLACK AND WHITE. ALSO FEATURE A SPECIFIC STYLE OF ART WHERE PEOPLE HAVE LARGE EYES, SMALL MOUTHS AND OTHER EXAGGERATED FEATURES. MANGA REFERS TO THE FORMAT OF THE BOOK AND SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH GENRE.



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STORY AND ART BY TITE KUBO
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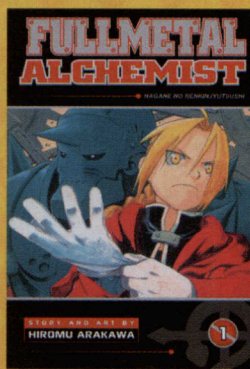
NARUTO VOL. 1
STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO
VOL.1 TO VOL.47 AVAILABLE NOW



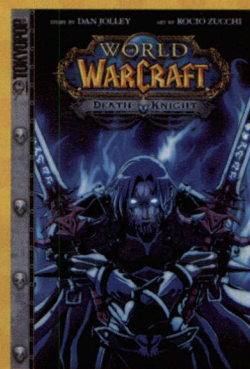
HELLSING VOL. 1
STORY AND ART BY KOUTA HIRANO
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STORY AND ART BY REI HIROE
VOL.1 TO VOL.4 AVAILABLE NOW



FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST VOL. 1
STORY AND ART BY HIROMU ARAKAWA
VOL.1 TO VOL.23 AVAILABLE NOW



WARCRAFT: DEATH KNIGHT VOL. 1
BY DAN JOLLEY AND ROCIO ZUCCHI
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BORDERS. Gametraders
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...AND ALL GOOD BOOKSTORES!

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OPINION

HEAVY DUTY

It took me a while but I finally played *Heavy Rain*. It's okay.

I hated the fact that the killer *always* turns out to be the same person. How do you encourage multiple playthroughs when the twist has already been ruined? It's like watching *Fight Club* upside-down. Everything will look different, sure, but at the end Joe Black is still a figment of The Hulk's imagination.

It also takes about a decade before anything interesting occurs, which happens to be a woman beating off a bunch of intruders in her underwear.

I aware that sentence is open to several interpretations. If you've played the game you'll know what I'm talking about.

Still, it's okay.

Christ it depressed me though – although not for the reason you might assume.

Now that I reflect, all *Heavy Rain* has done is remind me how limited real-life really is.

Wait, hear me out.

In *Heavy Rain* I can backtrack to any point in the story and give it another go. Act differently. Speak differently. I can undo bad decisions and make better ones.

Real-life isn't this interactive.

If life were anything like *Heavy Rain* I'd immediately cue up a whole mess of do-overs. I doubt that anyone, no matter how content they are now, doesn't have at least a few things in their past they'd love to redress. Opportunities you didn't grab. Things you didn't see. Embarrassing situations you didn't avoid. Fights you didn't win. People you didn't sleep with.

People you couldn't save.

For instance, my best friend died when we were kids. I'd definitely go back and replay

that level, hoping for a different outcome. There was a fight in high school I still feel cheated out of. I'd give that another slog too. I wouldn't have missed Nirvana at the 1992 Big Day Out either. "I'll just catch them next time they're here," I told myself. And then there's that girl.

There's always, *always* a girl.

Fortunately for me, my life up to this point has been way less achingly nihilistic than *Heavy Rain*. It's been markedly more fun and a lot less macabre than this unhilarious, wet, French murder mystery. Unfortunately for me, *Heavy Rain* is the only one of the two I can ever re-experience.

“There's always, *always* a girl”

At this point in time I vote everyone stops faffing about with games and sets about inventing a device that allows us to download our lives into some kind of state-of-the-art tech so we can dive back in and experiment with our pasts. In a simulation, I guess. But it's close enough. Pro tip: make this device a Terminator, ideally.

If we can land robot spacecraft on asteroids and take the seeds out of watermelons we can do this.

Are you up to it, science?

Angry Sackboy is an ex-videogame journalist quickly becoming anything but. Regrets? He's had a few. But then again, too few to mention.



OFFICIAL
PLAYSTATION
ANGRY SACKBOY

A SMARTER ALTERNATIVE

The new Android™-powered HTC Desire smartphone has finally arrived – and is available exclusively from Telstra

ON THE OUTSIDE

The HTC Desire is a slick new smartphone with an expansive 3.7-inch AMOLED display delivering images that are crisp with true colour brilliance. The subtle yet stylish outer shell and intuitive handset controls are simply the pinnacle of design. However, it is what's on the inside of this revolutionary device that will have you truly amazed.

FOR TOTAL PERSONALISATION

The Android operating system and HTC's Sense user interface allow you to take control of your smartphone in ways you have always dreamed of. Now you can customise how your Home screen appears and what information it carries. Choose from a wide variety of widgets and shortcuts to get your phone working the way you want it to.

FOR ULTIMATE COMMUNICATION

Staying in touch has never been easier. The HTC Desire features an innovative functionality that allows you to look up a contact's email, SMS, Facebook® or Twitter™ updates and photo posts with just a simple tap of the touchscreen – all without launching an app or browser!

FOR BETTER BROWSING

Surfing the mobile web has now become a seamless experience. The HTC Desire's mobile internet browser supports Adobe Flash content. Pages load smoothly and quickly, and can be viewed using multi-touch 'pinch-zooming' that not only enlarges text but also instantly snaps it into place in a more readable window.

FOR SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

Packing a powerful 1GHz Snapdragon processor and 576MB of RAM, the Desire zips through multiple application launches and large data downloads with the greatest of ease. And with a 5MP camera, GPS receiver, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, it has the muscle to perform any task you throw at it. The Android powered HTC is faster and works better in more places on the Next G™ network.

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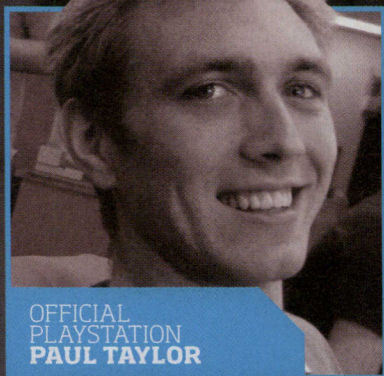


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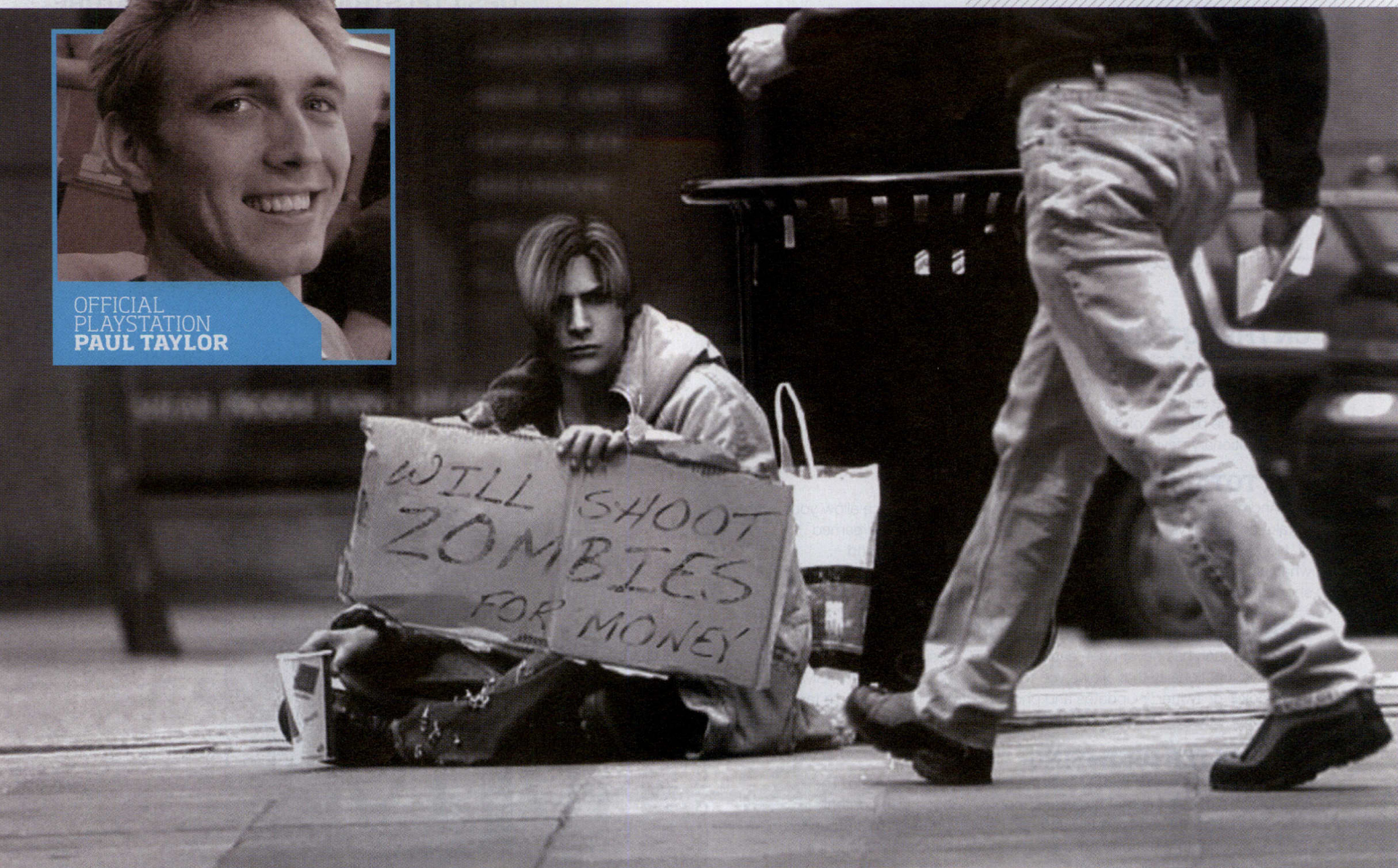


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OPINION

HELP WANTED

The meeting wasn't going well. It rarely did when Forgotten Male Leads Looking For a Fair Break – the FML for short – got together.

Gabe Logan could sense morale was low; something needed to happen.

"Okay. We're all in a slump here. Has anybody got any new ideas?"

Several sets of eyes glanced up, and Logan scanned the room. Through the low light he could see David Crenshaw, fresh from the H.A.W.X. Jack "Black" Kellar was playing with a brutal looking shotgun whilst glaring at Leon Kennedy, who was constantly stroking his foppish fringe that covered his eyes. Spike,

Logan. The regulars had taken up the seats at the back, and Grey felt nervous asking them to move over. Ethan Cole, who was making his own Area 51 out of tin foil, was especially paranoid and irritated.

Grey made uneasy eye contact with Logan, who just nodded sympathetically as he strained to see who else was in the room. The rest seemed familiar, but Logan needed Google to remember their names.

Silence.

"Nothing makes sense," said Tom Hansen, eventually, still clinging onto his life vest. "We're all more than adequate action heroes, and it just seems like a popularity contest. I mean, they could easily make a *Cold Fear 2*. Hell, drop the '2' and re-invent it! And can someone please tell me what the difference is between me and Isaac Clarke? We—"

He was drowned out by jeers and heckles.

"Christ, not this again," muttered Logan.

"No, come on, let me finish," whined Hansen, above the scoffs. "We both kill the undead, we're both trapped in a tin can, we both do it in the dark. I've been around longer than he has and he's already got a bloody

sequel coming out. Zombies are still cool, right Leon?"

Kennedy flicked his hair out of his eyes and was about to say something about how he didn't actually fight *zombies* anymore, but just as he opened his mouth he was cut off.

"Shut up Kennedy, you're just between jobs," snapped Kellar, his trigger finger itchy. "And cut your goddamn hair; you look like that jackass Dante."

Logan rubbed his temples and sighed deeply.

Just then, the door opened. It was Tanner. He looked a bit sheepish.

"Oh. Sorry, I just came to get my coat. There's, uh, someone you should meet."

As he quickly grabbed his jacket, a burly soldier stood in the doorway. The huge man stepped forward into the haze, his scuffed boots clicking on the cold stone floor, wearing a red vest that stank of cigar smoke, cheap booze and hookers.

It was Duke Nukem.

"Got room for one more?" he growled.

Paul Taylor thinks old characters never die, they just gather dust on your gaming shelf.

“Christ, not this again,” muttered Logan

who still reeked of monkey piss, was playing with his lip ring.

Front and centre, looking a bit nervous, was Will Grey. His adventures in the Void hadn't gone well at all and he felt uncomfortable sitting so close to the steely



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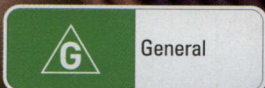


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COMPETITIONS

WIN! WIN! WIN!

WIN!

BEAR-LY LEGAL

Thanks to our chums at AIE, we have 10 copies of *Naughty Bear* to give away. Set on Paradise Island, the titular Naughty Bear is having a hard time making friends, being ignored, beaten up and bullied by the other bears. So, he decides to change things by any means necessary. He may look scruffy and harmless but beneath that fuzz beats the heart of a psychopath: it's definitely not a game for children! For your chance to win, answer this question and follow the entry instructions below.

Question: Which two people, alive or dead, would you invite to your picnic and why?



Design is subject to change

WIN!

TOP (METAL) GEAR

Thanks to our friends at Mindscape and Sony, we have *Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker* bundles to give away to three readers. You could win a PSP, a copy of *Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker* to play on that PSP, and also a very limited edition W-series Walkman, emblazoned with a *Metal Gear* motif. There are only 50 of these available in Australia, so this is a damn awesome prize! For your chance to win, simply answer this question and follow the entry instructions below.

Question: In 25 words or less, what's the best hiding spot you know of, and why?



HOW TO ENTER

To enter *Official PlayStation Magazine* competitions email your entries to ops@themediainfactory.com.au with the name of the competition ONLY in the subject line. Email entries are entitled to one entry (multiple entries will be deleted!). Alternatively, send clearly marked postal entries to **OPS competitions PO BOX 1037, Bondi Junction 1355**. Please include your name, age and address with your answer on the back of an envelope. Chance plays no part in determining winners. Competitions close 01/09/2010. Winners will be notified by mail.



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GET ON BOARD

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Hey guys! A few months ago I didn't even know what the PlayStation console looked like. I guess I was one of those ignorant people always whinging about men and boys playing the games and escaping the real world as they were too weak and unwilling to deal with the real life issues. But one day I met a beautiful guy who initialised my undiscovered interest in the gaming world.

Let me just say for the record that on the outside I do appear as your typical high-maintenance female who requires constant attention (definitely not typical girl gamer), but quite frankly (courtesy to the great guy mentioned before) I have a deep side of me that realised, once properly introduced to the PS world, that games are not just for boys, and are definitely not a tool to escape the ever-increasingly harsh world we live in.

I have changed my perceptions of games in the past months so much that I cannot believe how I could ever live without it.

I have a BA majoring in politics and international relations (I can already see few heads shaking in disgust) and really do take world problems to my heart. But after being so frequently disappointed with the inability of real men/women taking a stand on resolving the world's problems I have given up on allowing credibility to any of the political elite running the world today, in the past or future. Instead I have turned my passion to the gaming.

I am still yet to invest in my very own PlayStation console, but I have been lucky



enough to be able to play and enjoy the games with my partner so far. I am amazed at the creativity of the games and storylines (no need to mention the graphics and art) and the challenge each game initiates in gamers through allowing ethical and moral choices determining the outcomes of a game.

I was compelled to write in by your last month's Letter of the Month, and had shivers all through my spine in agreement with the story. Also for the record, I have gone through pretty tough life, most importantly a bloody war that made me who I am now. I never had a chance to make such choices in real life, but in games I certainly do; which in the end doesn't make me feel helpless and powerless to make the world a better place for all of us.

In regards to your magazine – please keep up the great work! I have not been able to laugh that much in so long, and the difference you make to my reading life is beyond explanation. I am tired and sick of reading mainstream media that always concentrates on weaknesses and ills of the others and the world. Enough of that! You guys make things to the point and make realistic connection of the games to the real world (or disconnection if you like).

Can I please wish the very best and happiest birthday to my partner Ryu! Thank you.
Snjezana Matijek, NSW

We're glad you're enjoying yourself Snjezana! Also, ask Ryu to beat the snot out of Ken for us the next time he has a chance.



Letter of the Month wins a copy of: MGS: PEACE WALKER

Congratulations Snjezana! Enjoy Hideo Kojima's latest opus!

CUTTINGS

BLACK TO THE FUTURE

Black Ops: Why haven't you reviewed this game yet?!

Max Price, via email

It hasn't been released yet. It's not out until November 9. Expect a first hands-on soon.

ANYTHING?

I will do anything to get into the Cuttings section [unzipping sound]

Jemaine Oduro, via Facebook

That sound. It's so familiar. You're taking us back to 2007...

THE PROPOSAL

Alana Brennan would like to ask my best friend and gaming buddy: WILL YOU MARRY ME?

Alana Brennan, via Facebook

Wow. Is it a yes? It better be!



Drugs ≠ games

CRISIS TIME

To whom it may concern,

I'm extremely disappointed you've chosen to claim gaming addiction isn't a problem, in a response to a letter here in your last issue. A couple in Korea recently let their baby die from neglect because they were addicted to games. How can you ignore this crisis? The government should make rules about how long people can play computer games for.

Ignore me if you want, but my son buys your magazine and I await your response.

Cathy B, via email

We never said it wasn't a problem. You're putting words into our mouth. We said people are overreacting.

People are overreacting. You are overreacting.

This is a truly tragic story. Police say the couple, father Kim Yoo-chul (41) and mother Choi Mi-sun (25), spent up to 12 hours a day at internet cafes, leaving their three-month-old daughter home alone at their apartment in Suwon, South Korea. That they left a baby to starve to death is unforgivable. That they were each only sentenced to two years in jail for essentially murdering their own child is ridiculous. That the woman's two-year jail term has been suspended because she is pregnant with a second child is downright offensive. It's beyond belief.

Doom and gloom stories like this move newspapers and get mouse clicks, but to go into a tailspin claiming we're in the middle of a dangerous and deadly gaming addiction epidemic is ridiculous.

It's a classic case of making a mountain out of a molehill. In Australia, alcohol addiction causes over 5000 deaths per year. Smoking addiction causes over 15,000. This, however, is old news. People want to hear about new demons. Videogames fit this bill.

Globally, there have been at least three deaths caused directly by exhaustion from playing games for excessive periods of time – two in China and one in South Korea. There have also been deaths of others related to playing of video games, like this baby.

SPEAK TO US!

Love the mag? Hate the mag? We want your opinions and questions on *OPS*, on games – on anything that you feel the need to share with your fellow readers. The best letter of each issue wins the Game of the Month! Write to us on paper or on a computer at:

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STOREFRONT

We play the games so you can pick the cream from the crock. What deliciousness have you bought lately?



Lucas Hansen
BlazBlue

"Definitely a faster fighter when you compare it to other fighting games. I love it!"



Dean Godde
Far Cry 2

"An exceptional game – multiplayer plus fire equals a blazing good time, not to mention you can create and save your own playing maps! Great value."



Chris Wyatt
FIFA 08

"\$10! Brand new! Never leave a cheap game to rot inside its cover."



Jason Bryson
LittleBigPlanet (PSP)

"Nothing like having a sack in the palm of your hand!"

CAPTION THIS!

We have the screens, and all your captions are belong to us. Well, one anyway. Congratulations to **Michael Hormoz** for keeping it clean. A solid effort, you might say. Yabba dabba doo, etc.

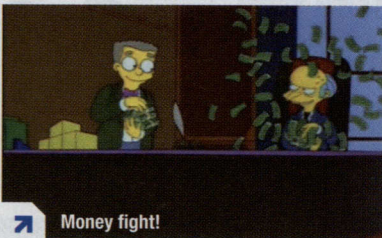


The Flintstones – Japanese-style

Any death from "gaming addiction" is one death too many but, as far as addictions go, this is small time. You call this a *crisis*? You need some serious perspective Cathy.

At any rate, videogame addiction is not included as a diagnosis in either the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders or the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems. The effects, however, of video game overuse are similar to those of other psychological addictions, like gambling, food, pornography and sex. Video game overuse may be, like compulsive gambling, eating or sex, an impulse control disorder.

How do you propose we regulate how long any person spends playing videogames? The vast majority of people play videogames for the same reason they eat indulgent food, or schtup each other. It's enjoyable. Are you proposing similar government interference to ensure we're not eating or screwing too much? If you want the Government to set a maximum amount of hours we can play games per week, you'd best demand it also tells us how many Mars Bars we're allowed, and how many times we're permitted to boink.



Money fight!

IT'S (NOT) IN THE GAME

What the hell is up with this EA Online Pass?

You mean we have to pay EA to buy a game, and then pay EA again to actually play it online? What? I've refused to play EA games for years, so I really don't care – but now I'm even happier I avoid them.

Edward Murphy, via email

Take a breath mate. You've missed some details. EA will begin charging people who purchase used versions of future EA Sports titles US\$10 for the use of certain online components of the game, which "can include basic online multiplayer, as well as group/league features, roster and playbook updates, downloads of user-created content." If you buy it new, you don't pay.

Yes, the arguments supporting the scheme are flawed. It does seem to stem from the continued, and fundamentally incorrect, belief that publishers are entitled to see profits on the back of used-game transactions. That's not how things work in any second-hand market. Car manufacturers only get to sell a new car once. Any subsequent transactions involving that vehicle are simply none of their concern.

The belief that cash is needed to prop up server support for used game buyers

who are playing on EA's servers, but haven't chipped coin into EA's coffers to do so, doesn't quite work either. When a new game is re-sold it's true EA will not profit from the second sale, but it's also true there has been no net change in the number of players using the infrastructure. Theoretically the first buyer has already covered this cost. Is there a difference between the first and only owner of a copy of *FIFA 11* playing it online for 12 months and several gamers playing one copy of *FIFA 11*, one after the other, for 12 months? No.

What this is, though, is business. EA has shareholders, and EA must make money for them. What this will likely do is drive down the costs of used EA Sports games to compensate. This will, in turn, no doubt drive something else up – but we can't foresee what.

We still think the solution is to drop prices for new games. Movies are getting more expensive to make, but DVDs are getting cheaper. The same thing happened with VHS. The result? A popularity explosion.

Why are you refusing to play EA games anyway? Did EA CEO John Riccitiello shit in your Weet Bix one morning? Did EA give you a wedgie in the library? Games are the result of many individuals, no different to you, working for years on a product to be enjoyed by gamers the world over. Why is the publishing label so important to you?

Are there any film studios you refuse to watch movies from? We doubt it. Imagine if you were heading out to the cinemas on a date, but only on the proviso your date didn't choose a Paramount movie, because you refuse to watch Paramount movies. For some reason. We bet her pants would just fall right off!

So you never played *Dead Space*, *Bad Company*, *Skate 2*, *The Saboteur* or *Brütal Legend* on account of an EA logo on the front cover? We're sure this seems hip to you, but you're just missing out on good games. It's your loss.

Wait, haven't you written in before? Get off the computer and start making *Beverly Hills Cop IV* Eddie! You're not fooling us!



Props if you recognise this guy

JUST KIDDING

Just a query about the latest mag, although great. On the letters page, where people write in and you guys reply to people, you didn't reply to one letter, not sure if it wasn't meant to be replied to or you forgot to put it in, but yeah. Not sure if anyone else noticed.

Lachlan Ryan, via Facebook

[Insert reply here]

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Leonardo Di Caprio stars as US Marshall Teddy Daniels in this thriller, set in 1954. Daniels and his partner Chuck Aule (Mark Ruffalo) are investigating the disappearance of a woman from her room in a prison for the criminally

insane, on *Shutter Island*. It isn't just as easy as 'find the murderess and get out', as Teddy discovers the island's hospital staff have unusual – and shocking – methods to treating their patients.

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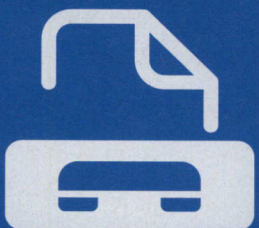


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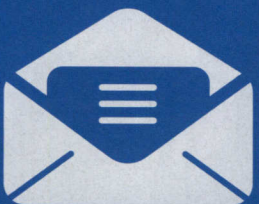
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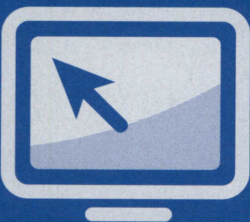
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LOVE THE

Last year Eric Bana released a fantastic documentary called *Love the Beast*. It was a fascinating and unique look at the relationship between a bloke and a four-wheeled hunk of highly-engineered metal. As far as odes to the automobile went, *Love the Beast* was the best we'd ever seen.

Like Bana, *GT* creator Kazunori Yamauchi's love of cars knows no bounds. You only need a few minutes with him and his opus to see this.

While *Love the Beast* is the story of a man and a car, *Gran Turismo 5* is story of a man and 1,000 cars.

As far as odes to the automobile go, they don't come much bigger than this.



GRAN TURISMO 5

BEAST

WORDS: ADAM MATHEW



“I do want to put as many Holden cars and other Australian models into the game as possible”

KAZUNORI YAMAUCHI



Rather than ask our question aloud, we hand Kazunori Yamauchi's translator an open text document on a phone. It's an unorthodox approach, but the question is so important, and left field, we can't risk any part of it becoming lost in translation.

The other information-hungry international journos in the room are instantly curious – possibly even a little miffed by the secrecy. This mild concern ratchets up to 'scoop, high alert' when the translator's stoic composure weakens and he allows himself a short chuckle and a shake of the head.

He turns to a smiling, slightly bewildered Yamauchi and poses the question to him in Japanese. We watch as the lead designer's grin widens a little bit more with every word that is understood. The question?

"Every year Holden and Ford fans get together in a small country town for the Bathurst 1000 to fight, drink and watch cars race. Have you heard of it?"

What Australian cars do you have in GT5 that might keep them from killing each other?"

After repeating the question in English and getting quite a few laughs around the room, the translator hands out Yamauchi's response. "I do want to put as many Holden cars and other Australian models into the game as possible but Australia happens to be quite far from Japan. It's actually hard to get our staff over there to do a lot of the testing that we need to do. We're gonna keep making an effort to get there."

"And I've always heard about the chaos that goes on at the Bathurst track and I actually have a dream to maybe one day participate in one."

Honestly, we get the impression that the big man appreciated a different style of question rather than two dozen people asking him boring variations of: "So, why did this game take so long?" This theory gets confirmed when question time wraps up and Yamauchi and his translator seek us out in the

crowd to shake our hand while sporting grins larger than most SUV grilles.

Yamauchi is a consummate car nut and one hell of a pleasant guy. And let's face it; he's got a lot to be smiling about. After six years of development, two prick-teasing demos and US\$60 million dollars spent – Yamauchi is f-i-n-a-l-l-y giving the green light to his motorsport magnum opus.

All that extra time and energy has been spent very wisely it seems, Yamauchi tells us that GT5 will have over 1,000 cars in its garage. Over 800 of these fall into the standard cars category, which offers a slew of sensual sports cars and many returning favourites from the GT games from yesteryear. Despite the nomenclature, they still look great.

The remaining 200 will be premium class cars, each one intricately reproduced with enough detail to send a shiver of joy down the spine of the most obsessive-compulsive petrol head.

Like we said, this isn't to say the standard cars

ACROSS THE LINE!

Check out these shots of the *Top Gear* Test Track that some in the office initially mistook for photographs. These are screenshots (and yes, that is The Stig).



GRAN TURISMO 5

The time-of-day lighting is spectacular

Pictured: A monkey making love to a football, possibly

Check out how the rear lights make the dust glow!

Huge crowds will feature

Red Bull Racing HQ. Not pictured: 999 other cars

are some sort of visual slouch. It's just that the premium cars offer little extra touches of detail like fully recreated interiors, rendered undersides, the ability to use high or low beam lights and full, panel-shredding damage in fender benders.

Standard cars feature only very basic interiors hidden by darker tinted glass, one headlight setting and cosmetic damage is limited to dirt, scratches and dents. Still, both standard and premium cars feature horns, reverse lights, mechanical damage and the ability to roll over during wrecks.

Yamauchi is so proud of the premium cars he sheepishly informs us that he, perhaps, went a little overboard in their construction. He suggests that they could easily be used for a PS4 version of *GT* (assuming such a wondrous machine and game existed). Looking at the comparison shots between real life and the in-game models it's hard to disagree.

Outside of your automobile, the visuals are just as seductive. *GT5* now sports a brand new debris system that has your tires flicking up dirt and grass, along with other visual perks such as smoke illumination and colliding sparks. In truth, we

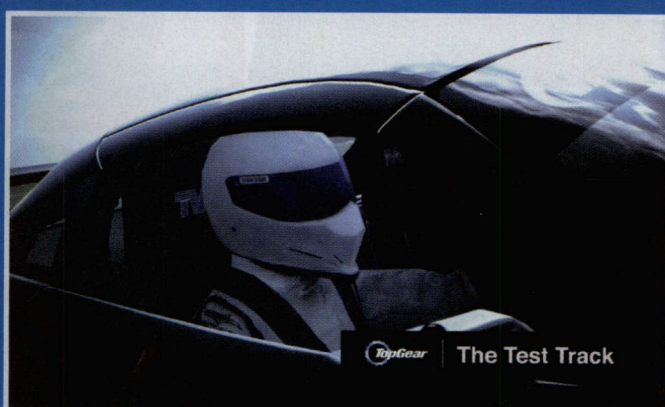
saw pretty much every game at E3 – from all three camps – and this was the visual belle of the ball.

It's even more so when you factor looking at in 3D, or looking at it in 3D along with the PS Eye camera accurately tracking your head movements and replicating it in-game. The depth in the latter (especially in the cockpit view) is something you need to see to fully believe.

Yamauchi's seduction of our eyeballs continued

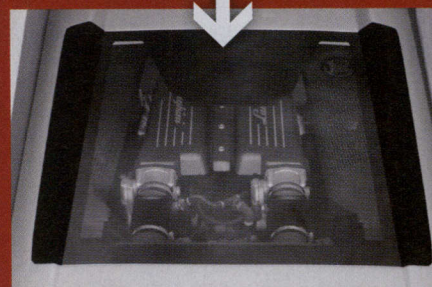
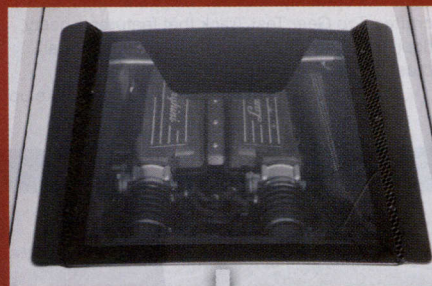
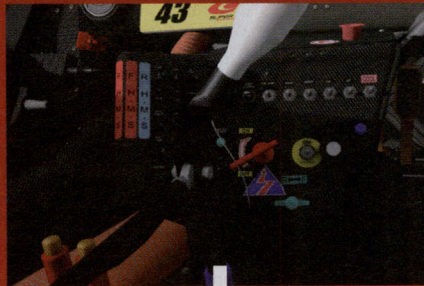
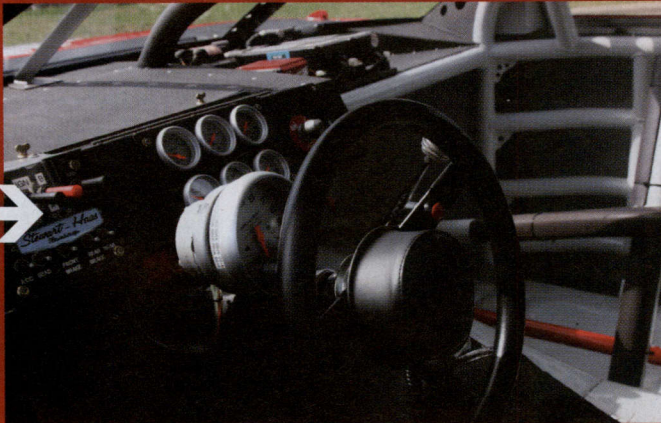
unabated when he showcased a bunch of new circuits, including Toscana, a taxing dirt track with a draw-distance to die for, and Rome, a track familiar to *GT* fans – only now it's based around the Colosseum. Last, but certainly not least, there's a meticulously crafted *Top Gear* Test Track that features a nasty, figure eight setup that should cause more fatal crashes than a porn school billboard.

Tracks are so highly-detailed that they take up



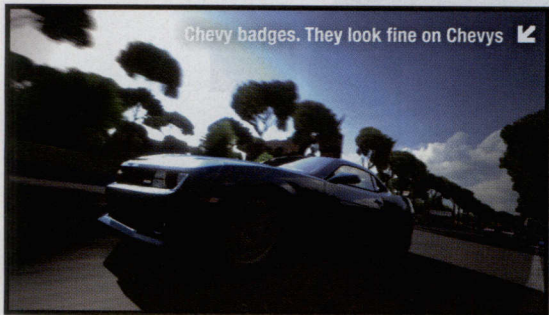
GT VERSUS REAL LIFE

Check out the following comparison shots to see just what sort of tiny detail the premium car models feature. The line between fantasy and reality just got obliterated.

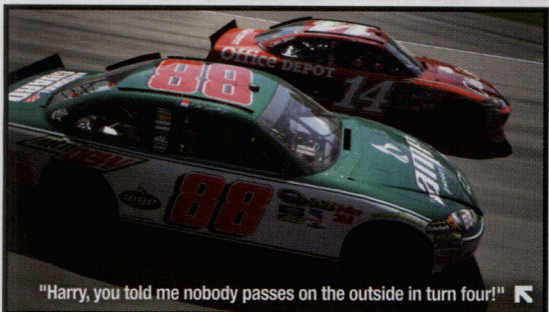




We're finding it hard to... er, focus



Chevy badges. They look fine on Chevys



"Harry, you told me nobody passes on the outside in turn four!"

to two-and-a-half years to build. For instance, every scrap of (non-profane) graffiti on the Nürburgring Nordschleife has been recreated perfectly. You'll have the option to synchronise the game's time of day with the track's current local time – *GT5* features full time-of-day effects, and night racing.

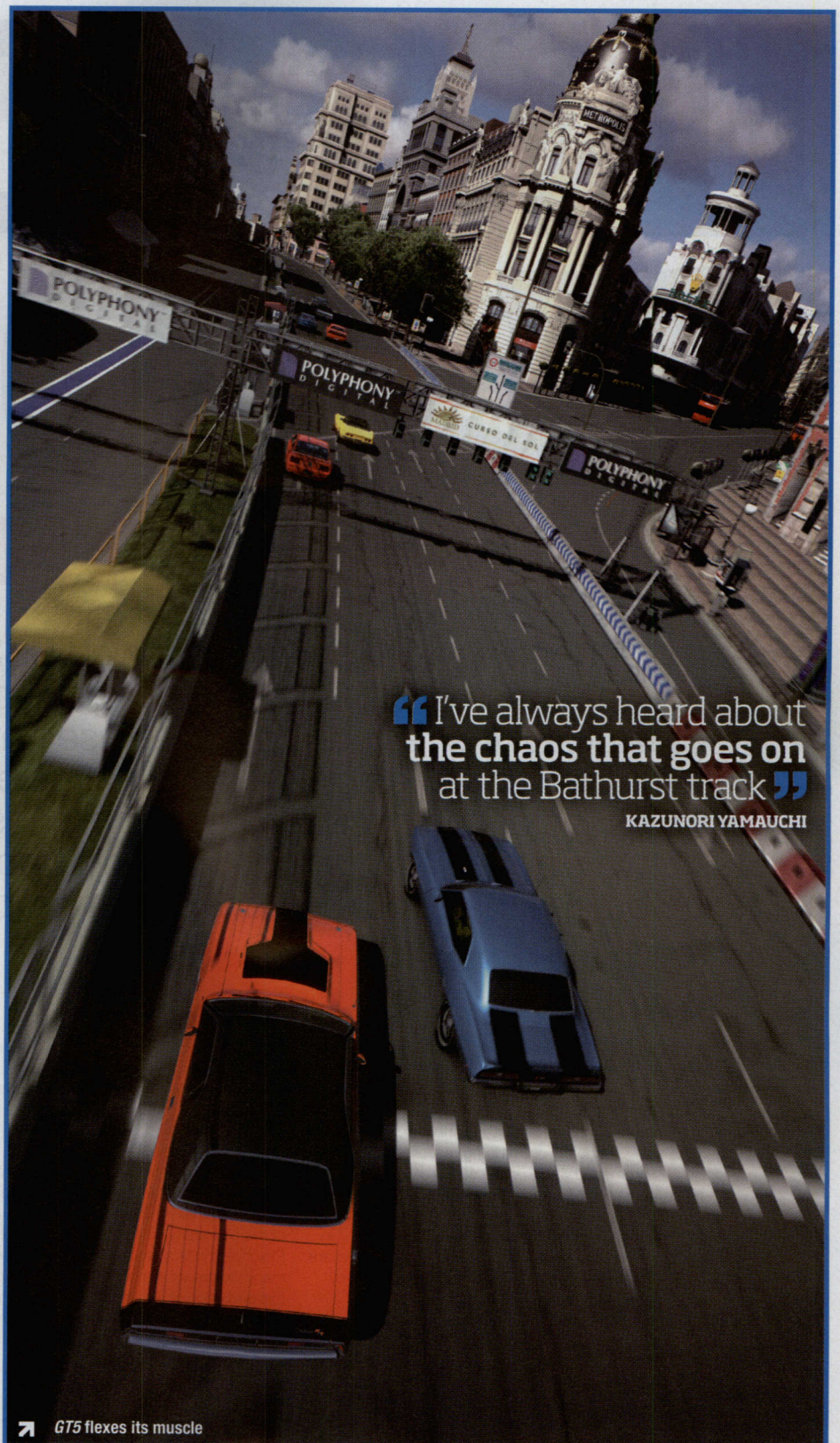
The crowds will even be dynamic, so there will be more tents, cars, and motorhomes at the longer endurance races.

Under the sexy hood, *GT5* will also let you get your "Daytonaaa" on with a full NASCAR racing option, along with the World Rally Championship and Super GT events. Unlike you might expect, NASCAR vehicles aren't just limited to ovals. They can be used on all tracks in the game. NASCAR pit crew's actions have been painstakingly re-created.

The game doesn't feature the F1 license, but it will feature F1 cars. Ferrari will feature, along with others. The appearance of Sebastian Vettel and Red Bull Racing HQ in the latest *GT5* footage would seem to speak volumes there.

We're also give some more details on a multiplayer lobby system called My GT Lounge. You'll be given your own little hub-area, where all your friends and anyone you've ever invited to your lounge is displayed, as if it were a garage room. You can spectate on your friends while they're racing, you can chat to them, give them little hints (or constructive criticisms like "Dude, you're driving Miss Daisy"), and it appears as a sort of live feed in the corner of their screen.

If you're all about bragging, you'll be happy to know that anyone can instantly access stats, including races won, cars owned, distance travelled and clams earned. Couple this with a Photo mode – where horny mecaphiles can take and share photos of their precious rides posed in locations like Tokyo,



"I've always heard about the chaos that goes on at the Bathurst track"

KAZUNORI YAMAUCHI

GT5 flexes its muscle

Italy and Austria – and you've got one hell of a promising community.

New features are all well and good, but the biggest announcement of E3 was a rock solid release date on the game, November 2 2010. Yamauchi seems very confident on this date and he mentioned that he will be revealing even more details and new features for *GT5* at this year's GamesCom in Germany. Associate *GT5* producer

Chris Hinojosa-Miranda went on the record at E3 claiming his favourite feature of *GT5* was still undisclosed – which seems to hint something big is yet to come. A track or livery editor, maybe? We're actually hearing whispers of karting and stunt arenas as we put this issue to bed.

Honestly, Yamauchi doesn't need to unveil more features to start us up – our engines aren't so much idling as they are red-lining.

IN COLD BLOOD:

THE MORAL OF THE STORY

Out of the top 100 best-reviewed PS3 games, 41 are about walking around with a gun or a projectile weapon, shooting stuff. Of the rest, another nine use physical force as their primary mechanic. Our morality, based on the evolving expectations of civilised society, tends to go wayward when we play. So why is it that we enjoy doing bad things in games that would otherwise get us locked up?

WORDS: PAUL TAYLOR

"We like doing things in games that we can't do in real life," says Dr. Daniel Johnson, senior lecturer of Bachelor of Games and Interactive Entertainment at Queensland University of Technology. "I'm doing research at the moment trying to get a sense of people's personalities and what games they're attracted to. The next level down, do certain personality types play games like *Fallout 3* in a particular way? And I think they do. It's more often you get to be the person you're not or being something you can't be."

"We are attracted to certain things in games, but I wouldn't go as far to say that we're attracted to being baddies or more violent," he continues. "I think it might be as simple as the excitement and action."

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

"I don't think it's about being 'good' or 'bad'," says Karsten Lund, game director at IO Interactive, the developer behind the upcoming *Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days*. "If you want to immerse yourself in a different world than the one you're in, you want to be in a world that is simpler. The games about criminals are more fun because it's a simpler universe; it's much easier to navigate in a universe where you don't have to obey the rules [of reality]."

"In terms of *Kane & Lynch* it's not being about good or bad. It's not about living the life of a crook, it's about people in trouble and taking the measures they need to take to try to get out of it."

"By early adolescence, the normal human brain has matured and understands the difference between fantasy and reality," says Dr. Daniel King, a research associate at the University of Adelaide's School of Psychology. "It's important to recognise that many violent video games are designed with this audience of adults in mind. Video games are engaging because they portray conflict within a fantasy universe, where problems can be solved with a pull of a trigger."

This only partly explains why we're attracted to games that let us do morally bad things; there has to be more to it than being attracted to bright lights and loud noises, or it being a simpler world for us to explore. We know games are fun, otherwise we wouldn't continue to play them. But what drives us to continue to do bad acts?

"I would argue that the popularity of video games may be attributed, in no small part, to the sense of power that a game provides the player," continues King. "Questions of good and bad are less critical to the experience of playing a game. Being powerful doesn't necessarily mean being bad or good."

"In my own research, I have found consistently that the reward features in video games keep us hooked. The adult content, including violence, drug use, sexual content, is less important to the experience. The moral content comes second to the rewards."

JERKBAGS, INC.

"A quintessential question here is 'do we see things being bad or evil in the context of playing a game?', or do we see it as a gameplay mechanic?" asks Chris Stead, a veteran Australian gaming journalist. Over the last 13 years he's been the editor *Australian GamePro*, *Krash*, *gameplayer.com.au*, and is currently the editor of the Australian edition of *Game Informer*.

"The first thing I wanted to do in *GTA/V* was jump in a car, drive on the pavement and run down all the pedestrians. It's not because I want to be evil and run people over; the consequence in the game world isn't going to affect my gaming experience – it's just funny. It's more about humour than anything."

It seems that we can say that an attraction to being a bad guy – or at least a homicidal jerk – is because it's just funny. Slapstick as a form of entertainment kept Charlie Chaplin in business for many years.

"I've taken joy in committing a perversely uncharacteristic act if the character annoys

FROM FACEBOOK

We threw the questions out there to our readers on the Facebook page: How many of you take the 'evil' path when you're playing games – and enjoy it? Or, have you ever played a game and felt uncomfortable about pulling the trigger on a digital enemy?

CHRIS COWELL: I did the evil path playing *Red Dead Redemption*. Every chance I get, I kill strangers.

MAX MEGELE: I always take the 'good' path first playthrough and then go evil on the second to see what is different and also to shoot whoever pissed me off in the first playthrough in the face. A digital enemy/character is just a whole mess of pixels and code so who cares? Since when have pixels had rights?

ADRIAN EMERSON: I normally don't do the "evil things", but every now and then it's fun to bust out some *GTA* cheats and go five stars blowing everything in sight up.

MARC MURKIN: As in life, I follow the good path but sometimes you just have those knee-jerk-reaction-to-the-face-or-balls towards someone that just gets in your way. The beauty of games with choices is that you can play again and think 'what if I press this red button instead?'

ALANA BRENNAN: I have for, the most part found it hard to turn the gun on innocent bystanders. For me gaming offers me two things, the first being some time to chill out and have a laugh, but it also gives me choices free from the consequences of the outside world where the only damages of my actions are to pixels.

CALLUM BRAITHWAITE: I play the good path first to see how the game was 'meant' to be played, then the evil path. I've done this on *inFamous*, *Red Dead Redemption* and both *BioShock* games, and it really gives you the full scope of the game.

Want the chance to be part of the mag? Go to tinyurl.com/OPSAus, or search for 'Official PlayStation Magazine – Australia' at facebook.com

JUSTIFIED

Next time someone asks you how could you play a game 'where all you do is hurt people', tell them you subscribe to the utilitarian view. Dr. Daniel King explains:

"On the one hand, virtue ethics tells us that any kind of simulated immoral act can erode our moral character, even if the consequences are insubstantial. Basically, killing a virtual bad guy makes us less morally pure so we should avoid doing it. On the other hand, the utilitarian view tells that the consequences of killing virtual characters are insignificant because there is no risk of any real person being harmed in any way." Simple!



me," says Johnson. "It's also funny dumping an NPC from a team or letting them die in a skirmish because they've been annoying, particularly if the AI is bad. I also think that that perverse humour we get out of that sort of violence is inherently tied to an awareness of a make-believe world and what isn't possible in real life, and that cathartic joy in ignoring the boundaries that we can't ignore in our everyday lives."

CARROT AND STICK

"Whether some players prefer being good or bad is contingent on numerous other factors, such as the consequences of their moral choices," King explains. "How moral actions relate to story progress and rewards is the key consideration. If a video game tends to reward bad behaviour with points or special items, then it is likely that the player will repeatedly perform bad actions to further their progress."

But what of games that don't offer this, or reward the player in different ways for their acts? It's possible to play *Fallout 3* without picking up a gun at all and instead relying on your wits, skill and charm to reach the end. *Heavy Rain* doesn't give any type of reward items as you're hunting for Ethan Mars' child, yet there are many paths players can take to reach its conclusion.

"Some people may say 'games train you to take the most violent or horrible option' but I don't think that's the case," says Johnson. "Maybe they train you into the most action orientated."

"*Heavy Rain* builds up to a moment where you have the option to shoot someone. I put the controller down for 15 minutes to really think about what I was going to do; I wanted to get my son back, but I didn't want to go against the moral code of the character, and me as the character.



"A lot of the time we're more comfortable with violence when the motivation is justified. In *Heavy Rain* you do terrible acts because you want to get your son back and I think most people feel more comfortable [doing bad things] because of that. Most gamers feel more comfortable [playing a violent game] when their actions are justified by war or the need to right a wrong."

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

So if games are about risk and reward, especially when doing bad things, violence as comedy, and living in a world with less rules than our own, does this weaken our own morality? We at *OPS* believe that playing a game where you're carrying a weapon isn't going to turn you into the next tabloid headline, and there's a lot of evidence that supports this. A US Secret Service study found that only 12 per cent of those involved in school shootings played violent videogames, while 24 per cent read violent books and 27 per cent watched violent films. But can we legitimately say "it's just a game" when we're being a total bad-arse?

"I think one of the biggest problems we face as a young industry is the lack of understanding is that we grew up with games



and we understand what they are," explains Stead. "For instance, when my mum sees me playing a shooter she just sees me shooting someone, whereas I'm thinking 'I've got to get to the end of this level to stop X from happening to Y' and 'I want to know what happens next in the story'."

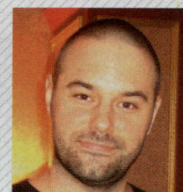
"The industry and the community do need to ask questions like are there people who are vulnerable to this exposure and imagery," says Johnson. "I still think it remains a game... When people played anything from draughts to chess, we're playing to defeat an enemy or to 'kill' the opposing team. What's gotten better is the representation of the underlying metaphors."

Lund agrees. "I do think that even a game of chess is about war; all games have a set of mechanics and a fantasy. That fantasy helps us understand the mechanics and it works the other way around. So the fantasy you choose for the game can be anything and it usually is about war or violence."

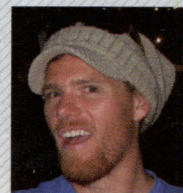
"Video games are fascinating because they challenge our moral positions on simulated immoral acts," states King. "As depictions of violence become more photo-realistic, and the victims of violence become more humanised, it may be more difficult for some people to reason away that we are not hurting anyone, including ourselves. The research does not currently support the notion, however, that people who kill hundreds of digital representations in video games are at risk of causing harm to real people."

"That's what games are here for," Lund concludes. "It's about trying stuff out that you can't try in real life." 🐱

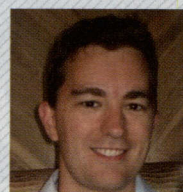
TALKING HEADS



▲ **Daniel Johnson**
Senior lecturer, Bachelor of Games and Interactive Entertainment at QUT



▲ **Chris Stead**
Editor, *Game Informer*



▲ **Daniel King**
Research associate, University of Adelaide



▲ **Karsten Lund**
Game director, IO Interactive



INDEPTH

HAND
SANITIZING
STATION



PlayStation Move

PS3

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING



13



RED FACTION
ARMAGEDDON

CREATIVITY

UNLEASHED

ATTENDEE ON-SITE REGISTRATION

SEE YOU

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2010

Want the definitive guide on the best gaming has to offer for the rest of 2010 and beyond? Look no further. We're back from the world's favourite videogame expo and have distilled the LA show down into an 18-page blowout of the top 40 PS3 games that, based on our experiences of them at E3 2010, rock hardest. Start drooling.

WORDS: ADAM MATHEW



IN SHORT: The world's best motors looking the best they ever have

GRAN TURISMO 5

We've already said plenty about *Gran Turismo 5* in our huge six-page feature starting on page 34. Turn back, unless you've already read it, for the full scoop on new tracks, premium and standard car models, night racing and Polyphony Digital CEO Kazunori Yamauchi's thought on Holdens and the Bathurst 1000. But regardless, no E3 2010 coverage would be complete without a special mention of Sony's upcoming juggernaut.

At the very least it gives us a great excuse to run another giant screenshot that illustrates just how gosh-darned beautiful this beast will be.

If it feels like we've been following the gestation of this long-awaited title for years, it's because it *has* been years. We got our first glimpse of it back in a small room in Sony's Sydney office way back in early 2008. *GT5* appeared as our March 2008 cover game.

That was issue #14. The issue you're holding in your hands now – also sporting *GT5* as the cover game – is

issue #46. That's a *long* time between drinks.

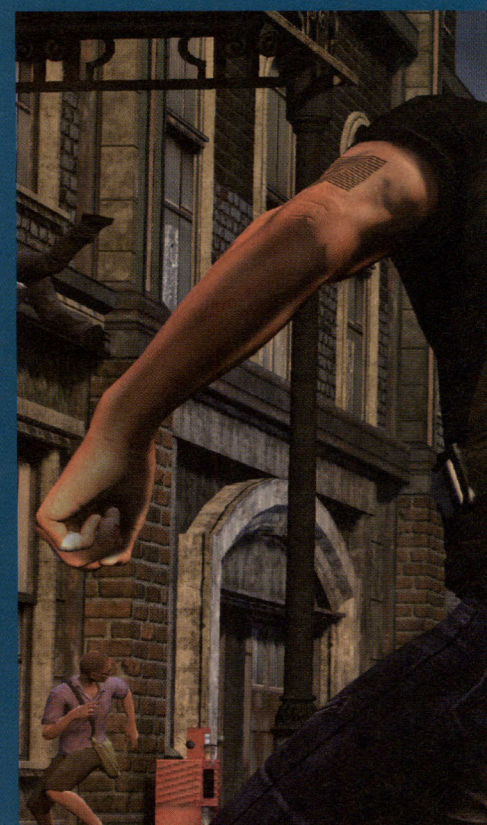
Since then we've seen release dates slip, and slip and slip. But we've also seen the project improve by leaps and bounds.

The difference between *Gran Turismo HD*, released on PSN way back at the beginning of the PS3's lifecycle, and *GT5* is simply enormous.

The detail in the cars and tracks is far beyond anything that anyone is doing now. It's that simple. Racing games have come a long way since *GT4*, but *GT5* will leave them all in its dust. Come November, developers will once again be playing catch-up with the best in the business. We're certain of that.

We've *been* to Polyphony Digital's Tokyo lair. We've seen the passion. We can absolutely vouch that these cats have 98 RON running through their veins, and that they want the world to experience their masterpiece as soon as possible. But only when it's ready.

Bring on November.





IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

Just check out the detail on this Dodge Challenger! You might as well order a leash for any friends of yours that still think *Forza Motorsport 3* will remain a better driving sim. They're going to need it for their seeing-eye dog.

“The difference between *Gran Turismo HD* and *GT5* is simply enormous”

GRAN TURISMO 5

INFAMOUS 2

IN SHORT: 1.21 gigawatts of incredible super hero action

When Sucker Punch first unveiled *InFamous 2* and its redesigned protagonist, the Internet turned *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy* and had a hissy fit. Rabid fanboys bemoaned his new threads, his hair makeover and even his backpack.

Seriously though, who gives a crap?

What matters is how the game plays and from what we saw, this sequel has the potential to be... shockingly good.

Thanks to an entity known as the Beast, Cole is forced to leave Empire City in search of new ways to hone his abilities. He ends up in a New Orleans-like city called New Marais and begins searching the metropolis for technology to harness his electrical powers. However, Cole's arrival is not a welcome one. New Marais is home to a militia group devoted to "human purity." Cole also has to worry about the Beast, who is slowly tracking him down.

What impressed us most was how the in-game cutscenes seamlessly transition into in-game action. Also, you have new skills – including an 'Induction Launch' (fires you high into the air), more comprehensive parkour moves, the 'Ionic Vortex' (summons a giant tornado) and a melee weapon in the form of a giant electrically-charged rod. Believe us, when it comes to busting heads, in rod we trust.

IN SHORT: Cybernetically-altered awesomeness

DEUS EX: HUMAN REVOLUTION

Words can't express how impressed we were with this game. Every waking minute of our E3 schedule was jam-packed with game appointments, but we opted to ditch something just so we could witness this for a second time.

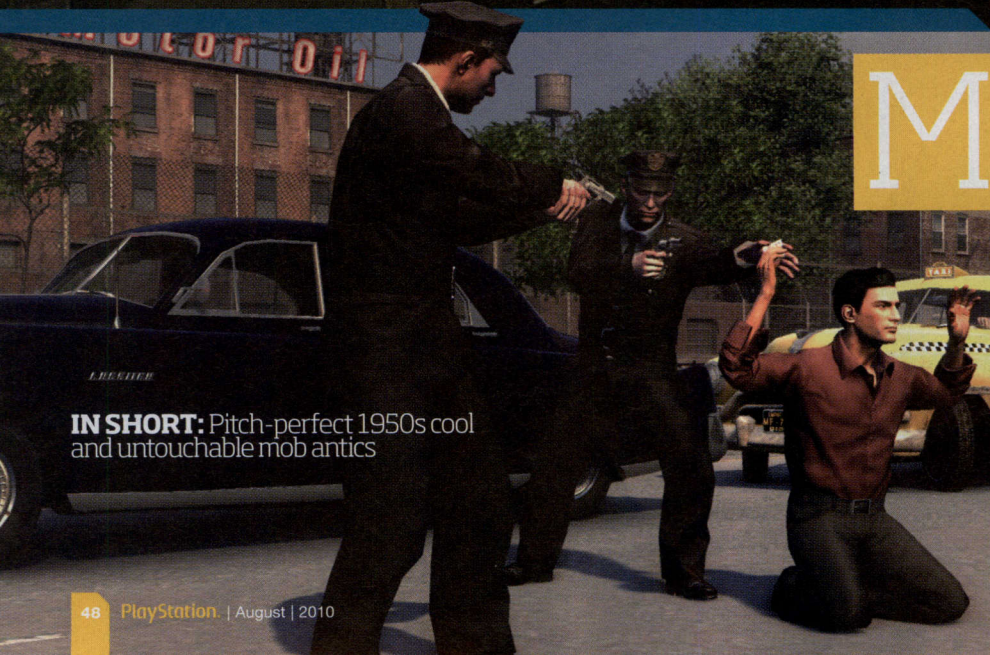
If you've never played a *Deus Ex* game and are unfamiliar with its pedigree we don't blame you; it didn't get much of a chance on the PlayStation format. Fortunately you will soon be able to erase that sin by playing this third iteration of the franchise.

The story takes place in 2027, a time of chaos and conspiracy. You step into the mechanically-altered guise of Adam Jensen, a cybernetically enhanced private security specialist (translation: you eat Terminators for breakfast). The innovative bio-technology corporation you work for is brutally attacked and it is your job to descend into the seedy underbelly of Shanghai to investigate who is responsible, to sift through a growing global conspiracy and bring the perpetrator(s) to justice.

Deus Ex is a thinking man's shooter that offers you multiple solutions to any objective. In our demo we were first shown the conversational approach. Interacting with the denizens of the city yielded very believable digital actors and a range of topic responses and options.

We then tried some stealth. Overhearing some security guards gained us access to a passcode which lead into a labyrinthine vent system that circumvented cameras and allowed us to silently kill guards with Jensen's optical camo and suppressed pistols. We even one-hit killed fools using a retractable sword built into his forearm. Rad.

Gung-ho is an option too. Using a comprehensive third-person cover system, a futuristic machine gun and a heat-seeking rocket launcher we threshed our way through the unfortunate Triad security guards. We also used our X-ray vision to punch through a solid brick wall to snap the neck of a guy leaning on the other side. Mark our words. This. Will. Rock.



IN SHORT: Pitch-perfect 1950s cool and untouchable mob antics

MAFIA II

Before we begin, let's get the most important information out of the way first: the collectible items in this game are actual *Playboy* magazines with viewable centrefolds. That is, in fact, awesome.

You'll also be happy to know that the videogame fashioned around the wanton boobage also looks a treat as well. We went skulking around the 10 square miles of Empire Bay and were pleasantly surprised with how good the game feels.

Firstly, the classic cars were suitably tail-happy around corners but were always under control. The more measured nature of the free-aiming gunplay was a blast too, thanks to our Thompson, a Colt 1911 and a pump-action shottie. This doesn't disrespect the family.

“We one-hit killed fools using a retractable sword built into his forearm. Rad”

DEUS EX: HUMAN REVOLUTION

TRICKS UP YOUR SLEEVE

Being part robot, Adam Jensen has been augmented with a bunch of kick-arse combat systems. Along with his sword he can turn invisible, has X-ray vision, can jump insane distances and much, much more. Did we mention the wall-punching thing?

BULLETSTORM

This came as quite a shock. After viewing *Crysis 2* in the EA conference, our eyeballs were kicked in the retinas again when *Bulletstorm* was shown off. Possibly even harder.

If you're sick of ultra-realistic, tactical shooting (or games where the eff-word is only lightly sprinkled on) then this could be your gaming Memphis.

Epic describes this as a “blood symphony” where you're the conductor and the weapons are the instruments. An apt metaphor. We were kicking enemies into electrical boxes, using the whip to pull victims in for a shotgun blast to the face and even circling behind a mid-boss to shoot him in the only exposed section of his armour – his buttcrack. Like that last encounter, game could be a hole in one.

IN SHORT: Fun and mayhem raining down in bloody chunks

“[The gun] trains itself on the back of his melon and installs a blowhole”

GHOST RECON FUTURE SOLDIER

RUSSIA IS NO. 1

The story will take place in Northern Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. The Ghost unit will be fighting an ultra-nationalist force that took control of Russia and are invading neighboring countries.

The story-based cutscenes we saw was well-acted live action. Will FMV make a return?

THE PITCH: Real rockers use real guitars and... uh, keytars?

ROCK BAND 3

You're looking at 83 tracks here, including 'Been Caught Stealing' by Jane's Addiction, 'Here I Go Again' by Whitesnake, 'The Power of Love' by Huey Lewis and 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by Queen. Aus rockers The Vines also feature with 'Get Free'.

Harmonix has also revamped the game to allow players to jump in and out, to alter difficulty settings on the fly and even send custom set lists to friends. It's going to be compatible with existing games and DLC.

But the biggest switch-up is the addition of a keyboard/keytar peripheral and a Pro Mode that supports a *real guitar*. Harmonix has partnered with Fender to design an actual, six-string electric guitar that can work with either your amp or system of choice. Must have. Now.

IN SHORT: Stealth kills without the mandible-clacking

GHOST RECON FUTURE SOLDIER

Now here's a sequel that feels like it has been a long time overdue. *Ghost Recon Future Soldier* was easily in our top 10 games of the show. The exciting thing is; we saw but a shadow of all the previously announced features in action.

Stealth has never looked this slick. Our demo opens on a beach at low tide. The surrounding boardwalks are teeming with thermal-vision equipped militia. We quickly realise the camera is a first person-perspective when the view bobs up behind a clueless soldier and an optically-camouflaged gun rises up, trains itself on the back of his melon and installs a blowhole.

The camera quickly switches to third-person and we witness three other Ghost soldiers de-cloak from behind their cover. Up ahead we scope-target through the enemies until our integrated Cross Com system locates our mark. We urge our wolfpack forward as HQ tell us they need him alive. Goddamned spoil sports.

What follows is an exercise in +10 ninja skills. Flanking the positions underneath the boardwalk, we stealthily eliminate the entrenched soldiers with contextual, one-shot kills. The act of firing disrupts the camo; so timing, situational awareness and patience are all paramount.

Eventually we reach our target in a carpark, flanked by three soldiers and arguing over a map spread on the bonnet of a car. After issuing a squad command, our Cross Com paints three invisible beams that intersect three enemy frontal lobes. We inch towards our prize and tackle him the nanosecond his men get sniped.

Our Ubisoft hosts show us a more action-oriented side to the game too. Sniping helicopter pilots from a window draws a lot of fire, and we had to wade down onto the beach to intelligently flick behind bits of cover and trade lead with some reinforcement militia.

Make no mistake, the future is looking bright.

IN SHORT: You're going to Ibiza. You're gonna have a party

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED 2

In case you missed the original *Test Drive Unlimited*, the game was essentially a MMO meeting a racing game. In this sequel all players collectively "live" on the island of Ibiza (and later, Oahu). The general idea is to earn money through competition (and other challenges) to earn the Benjamins, buy exotic cars, luxurious homes and even fancy clothes (if that is indeed your... thing).

Cruising around the satellite-accurate Ibiza yielded both paved and dirt roads, and any joyride we took was rewarded with bonus cash (providing we didn't crash into stuff, like a learner burner).

The automobile game of *TDU2* is shaping up nicely. However, we do call shenanigans on the animatronic look of the human models.

IN SHORT: A north Korean takeover is inevitable. Inevit, inevitable...

HOMEFRONT

Homefront is unique in that it offers a fantasy slant on your typical military shooter. The team at Kaos Studios is bringing something new to the table in that it doesn't cast you as a military professional in a modern tactical shooter, nor are you a space marine with a plasma rifle and a granite chin.

Essentially, you're one of a group of civilian resistance fighters struggling to stay alive in a North Korean-occupied America. Kaos tells us that its two main themes are "the familiar has become alien" (quaint suburbia is now a death trap) and "the human cost" (having your homeland defiled is fairly untherapeutic for the average human psyche).

After a short introductory trailer detailing the meteoric rise of the North Koreans (which we won't explain here, but urge you to seek out on our cover disc), we get underway with some gameplay.

Homefront appears to be a game of two distinct halves: balls-to-the-wall action and short story-focused levels. We experienced the latter first. We're given some time to wander through a suburban

enclave that is a hodge-podge society spanning several residences, and sports camouflage netting, makeshift vegetable gardens and improvised communications devices. The detail in the environments and the atmosphere is impressive.

After being sociable to the women, children and other non-combatants, we hook up with some hot-blooded freedom fighters and enlist our services for an assault on an enemy controlled supermarket.

Later that night, we sit perched on a building as a squad of invaders chat in the carpark. Without warning a van bursts through their barricade with cock-rock blaring on its radio. We wait until 20-odd soldiers surround the van and then initiate a cluster mortar strike. We immediately feel a bit rare when some live victims start running around on fire.

We soon find ourselves in a firefight reminiscent of *Modern Warfare 2*'s Burger Town. Only this time we have an automated, missile-spewing APC at our beck and call. This game has huge potential. We hope to play it again soon. Until then, we're gonna be ronery.

DRIVER: SAN FRANCISCO

IN SHORT: Sideways chase action that won't put you in a coma (again)

Regardless of what you may think of the whole "I'm in a coma, but I can totally comander other people and drive their automobiles" thing, know that the car handling is *absolutely sublime*.

We got a chance to try some multiplayer and the smile is still on our dial. The concept was simple; chase a car (with exaggerated tail light trails) and stick to it. The player who sticks behind it earns points. Simple, right?

Wrong. Every player has the ability to 'shift', or switch cars on the fly. Some of us shifted to Zondas and RUFs to stay close – others selected semi trailers ahead of the target car, cleaned up the competition and shifted into something sporty (and un-destroyed) to earn their points. Let's hope the singleplayer storyline makes sense – because everything else is certainly in place.



CALM BEFORE THE STORM

It's refreshing to see an action game take a breather from time to time in order to establish characters and to flesh out the world a bit more. We just hope that these levels can be skipped through fast if needed, because the ADD crowd will chuck a wobbly otherwise.

“It doesn't cast you as a military professional in a modern tactical shooter”

HOMEFRONT

LITTLEBIGPLANET 2

IN SHORT: To hell with the world - we'll make our own games

Here's the biggest surprise information we unearthed when testing out *LBP2*: being a Sackperson is totally optional.

In the case of a real-time strategy themed level; Sackboy will hop onto a unit in your army and your interaction in the world is that of a cursor. In another, side-scrolling shooter, instance you can be directly controlling a vehicle that fires bullets resembling piles of poop (yep, we made those).

We were also informed of a movie mode where you get to place your Sackpeople, write a script for them, and position your virtual camera about. The potential for creating your very own TV shows and other animated (poop filled) hilarity is high.

The graphics look a bit slicker too, with animated backgrounds and a smarter UI. Bring this on.

TWISTED METAL

Not counting the random spin-offs, we haven't seen a fully-fledged *Twisted Metal* game since 2001. Even still, when it was announced at the press conference it didn't stop some PlayStation faithful from busting a nut. In some cases, both.

This new iteration focuses heavily on multiplayer, including online game modes with up to four-player split-screen, and 16 players online. There's a new mode called Nuke where you choose a faction to play against an opposing faction. Each side has a statue that must be destroyed. In order to achieve that you must abduct the enemy team's leader to get a nuclear missile that can then be launch at your opponent's statue.

Judging from what we've seen this is a reboot of the series with homages to the original and *Black*.

IN SHORT: A vehicular combat reboot to your face



IN SHORT: Adrenaline-fuelled racing through the end of days

MOTORSTORM APOCALYPSE

If *Mad Max* has taught us nothing else it's when the world goes to crap, you can forget your worries by driving a beast of a car really, really fast with like-minded lunatics.

Not content with just racing through desert mesas, jungles and on the sides of volcanoes, the MotorStorm crew have decided to take their risque brand of racing to a US city that is in its death throes, thanks to a natural disaster.

Occuring over a three day timeframe, *MotorStorm Apocalypse*'s backdrop is quickly consuming itself. On the first day you'll see office buildings and freeways, but when the festival climaxes it'll be a twisted, heaving pile of debris and death. Apparently, the final race is going to be a last ditch dash towards the safety of the MotorStorm freight ship as the entire city turns into hell on Earth.

Surprisingly, this is going to be a racing game with a story. Three in fact. Single-player is split into three separate campaigns of varying difficulty, and each is

tied to a unique character. The first contender is The Rookie, a stowaway on the MotorStorm carrier who will keep the casual racers happy. Next up is The Survivor, a middle of the road kind of racer who is second in line to The Big Dog, a billy-badass biker who is a veteran.

These characters aren't just a gimmick either. Each of their stories and trackside experiences will cunningly interweave like some sort of *Pulp Fiction* on wheels. Interesting, no?

This sequel will retain the core mechanics from *Pacific Rift*, and even though technically you're in an urban environment this is still "off-road racing". But now that the road surfaces offer a bit of bitumen, there are now a slew of new vehicles in the game including supercars, superbikes, hot hatches, muscle cars and even choppers.

The greatest feature has got to be the way the tracks change in real-time; bridges can buckle and twist, buildings collapse and rifts open up beneath you.

Bring on the end of the world, we say.



“When the festival climaxes it'll be a twisted, heaving pile of debris”

MOTORSTORM APOCALYPSE



E3 2010

IN SHORT: Do a little slide, shoot a little face. Get down tonight


VANQUISH

Vanquish is a sci-fi third person shooter that does for the disco knee slide what *Bayonetta* did for high-heeled breakdancing.

The hero is Sam Gideon, a scientist with DARPA who has developed a futuristic battlesuit. These high-tech metal long johns give him superhuman reflexes, and a weapon called the blade system. The latter doesn't have you picking up new weapons, so much as scanning and replicating them on the fly.

Gameplay-wise, SEGA is calling this a third-person action shooter. The 'action' term references some core systems used in the game called 'boost' and 'ARS'.

Boosting is a high-tempo way to zip about cover. ARS is a bullet time function that starts when your suit detects your arse getting kicked. Quick, slick and pretty.



CUSTOM CAR-NAGE

In *Apocalypse* you can customize your vehicles with vinyls, vehicle parts as well as modify the vehicle's handling, boosting and offensive abilities through perks. You can also create and design your very own game rules for online tournaments against other players.

IN DEPTH

“You’ll have to **step on both sides of the law** to milk 100 per cent from this”

NEED FOR SPEED HOT PURSUIT

MYAH COPPAH, SEE?

According to Criterion the relationship between the cops and racers is described as “a dog chasing down a rabbit”. The arm of the law is long with cops being slightly more powerful compared to the pesky underground racers. Sounds accurate to us.

ASSASSIN'S CREED BROTHERHOOD

IN SHORT: Friends who slay together stay together

You haven't truly lived until you've ridden a horse at full gallop through a villa under cannon bombardment. Conversely, you haven't truly *died* until Ezio Auditore has stolen a two-handed battle axe from one of your comrades and pitched it across the room and into your face.

Along with an improved combat system, a cannon-firing mini-game and an awe-inspiring draw distance, *Assassin's Creed Brotherhood* had plenty of other cool features hidden under its sleeve.

The first innovation revolves around Ezio training up some more assassins. At any time you can instantly target a rooftop guard for death or call down a lethal hail of arrows on multiple foes.

The second surprise was the robust multiplayer that assigns every player one mark. Use your wits and a radar to hunt and kill your victim for points. But watch your back – the hunter is also the hunted.



IN SHORT: It's *Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 3*, without the '3'

NEED FOR SPEED HOT PURSUIT

Need for Speed *Hot Pursuit*'s biggest feature is its Facebook-like Autolog. Using this online tool you can automatically track what your friends are up to, send them crude messages when they can't best your score, and generally get an overview of which races you'll need to do to maximise your street cred.

In terms of single-player, Criterion has fleshed out an entire career for both the cops and the racers. You'll have to step on both sides of the law to milk 100 per cent from this bad boy.

Unfortunately, E3 2010 was purely about unveiling the multiplayer aspects of *Hot Pursuit*. We weren't upset for too long though; jumping into a one-on-one car chase wowed us with a player introduction cutscene that was one part *Fight Night*, one part TV cop show.

Each participant in the chase has a unique set of weapons to help their own agenda, mapped to the D-Pad. If you're The Man you can unleash an EMP

which wreaks havoc on the escaping car, or you can order some AI-controlled, doughnut-munching buddies to block the road. Much like the *Hot Pursuit* and *High Stakes* games of yore, the cop player is given the sultry advice of the police dispatch, which informs them when their prey takes an alternate path and when spike strips are in place.

The criminal has access to devices of a decidedly different nature. They can jam the cop's radar, making detours off the main road more effective (plus it'll make their police cruiser smell like strawberry for weeks). Crims can also drop a decoy which will throw the police off their scent as they seek to make their getaway. Last, but certainly not least, the perp can use Overdrive, a 'ludicrous speed' turbo boost that warps the screen.

With Criterion at the wheel, we're inclined to think this has great potential. We thought the crashes were a bit weak sauce though, given Criterion's *Burnout* heritage.

SPEC OPS: THE LINE

At the risk of dropping an absolutely awesome dad joke; this sand-based shooter is looking pretty damned gritty.

It's also a lot colourfuller than we imagined it would be too. The interiors of the abandoned Dubai hotels are swathed in glass, marble and obscene opulence. In stark contrast, the world outside features victims hanging from lamp posts and the whole place looks like a bad day on Tatooine.

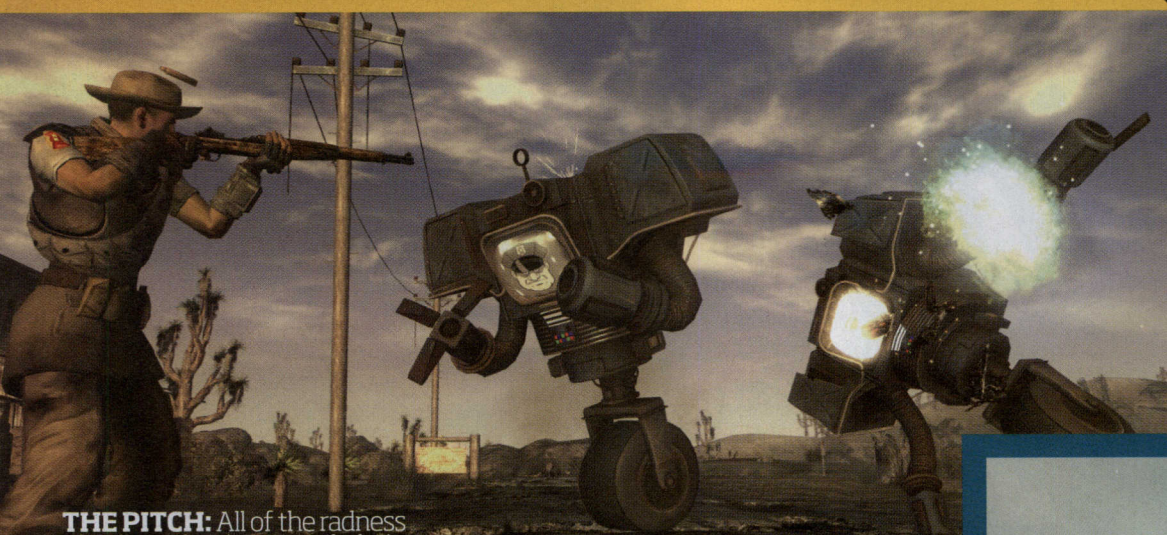
Initially the gunplay seemed solid but run-of-the-mill, until we saw how some structures holding back sand could be shot to bury enemies alive. Nasty!

There was also a morality decision at the end of our demo that suggested *Spec Ops* has quite a bit more going on beneath its sandy surface.

IN SHORT: Sand-sational firefight in a busted-arse Dubai

OPEN YOUR MIND, QUAID

Armageddon will take place underground this time (like the original). It will focus on the player fighting to free colonists from alien cocoons, reclaim cultist fortifications on the surface of the planet and hunting for artifacts to create insanely powerful alien weapons.



THE PITCH: All of the radness of *Fallout* - but in Vegas, baby!

FALLOUT: NEW VEGAS

It's rare to make the games developers laugh and applaud at something you've done when you've been handed the controller for a demo. But we managed it with *New Vegas*.

First, let us set the scene. While stumbling about in the Nevada desert we happened across an abandoned amusement park complete with a 20-foot tall plastic T.rex. Upon closer inspection of this dinosaur we met a sniper perched in its mouth. Boone was his name and he wanted us to track down the person(s) responsible for his wife's death.


It was our quest to explore the ramshackle town below his perch, interview the inhabitants, find the perpetrator and bring them back to the T.rex.

In the interest of avoiding spoilers, we did find the culprit after a bit of sleuthing - but we decided to set up a perfectly innocent stranger for the crime instead. Y'know, for sadistic kicks.

The real moment of hilarity was when we lured our victim in Boone's sights and gave him the secret "kill" signal. We were a good 20 metres away when Boone opened fire, but the victim's shattered head flew in a perfect bloody arc right towards us and thunked into the camera. Trust us, there were high-fives all around.

In that brief instant, the *Fallout* formula seduced us all over again. This is packed full of intriguing new characters, amazing environments and wanton gore.





IN SHORT: Proving reconstruction is just as fun as destruction

RED FACTION: ARMAGEDDON

Set on Mars in the year 2170 (50 years after the events of *Guerrilla*), *Armageddon* has you taking the role of Darius Mason, the tattooed grandson of the protagonist from the previous game.


The story goes that Mars' surface has become uninhabitable and, as a result, the surface dwellers need to move underground. To make things worse, an alien race hell bent on causing *Armageddon* emerges after you accidentally open a shaft in an old Marauder temple. Whoops, our bad.

The glorious destruction engine in *Guerrilla* has been taken better advantage of here thanks to two new abilities; the Nano Forge and the Magnet Gun.

The Nano Forge is much better than the one seen in the previous game. Rather than just being a tool for destruction, this Forge can quickly repair objects and structures. One example shown was the half-destroying of a sealed building to gain entry. Once inside the ruins we then 'Nano Forged' it back into an impenetrable bunker to avoid death by a swarm of hungry aliens.

The Magnet Gun shoots bullets which attach onto to just about any surface in the game. By firing two linked bullets you can cause a magnetic attraction that'll result in the two items being flung towards each other at a fantastic speed. Mischief ahoy.

What we saw looks pretty promising. Can't wait.



IN SHORT: One of the sexiest looking games ever... with jetpacks

KILLZONE 3

Jetpacks for the win. After being wowed off our feet with the 3D demo in the Sony press conference, we adjourned to a secret Sony meeting room for some hands-on time with this visual beast.

The demo level we checked out was entitled Intruder Flight and it detailed a daring mid-air rescue as Sev and Rico made their way into the frozen maw of Helghan's most desolate territory. This kicked off with an on-rails machine gun assault which had us tearing up Helghast structures and enjoying the increased destructibility of the environments.

Once that wrapped up, we were given access to the jetpack. It is an absolute dream to use, offering limited vertical boosts and quick dodging speed bursts in any direction. Using it in cover-to-cover scenarios effectively doubles the tempo of a firefight. We drooled.

CRYSIS 2

Looks absolutely gorgeous. It's not a vacuous supermodel though; using the Nanosuit you can tailor your tactics on the fly for some truly cerebral combat. One to watch.



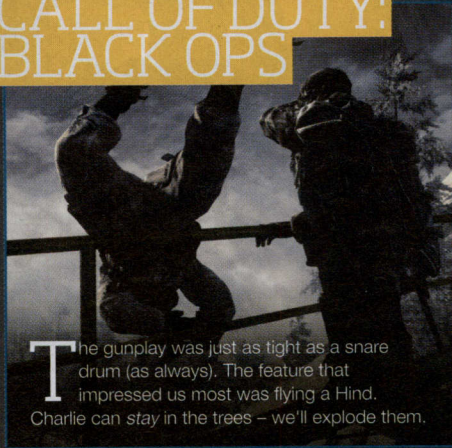
DEAD SPACE 2

What is it with Visceral Games and freaky baby enemies? The gameplay we saw was less claustrophobic than the first game but it was swarming with freaks. Eep.



CALL OF DUTY: BLACK OPS

The gunplay was just as tight as a snare drum (as always). The feature that impressed us most was flying a Hind. Charlie can stay in the trees – we'll explode them.



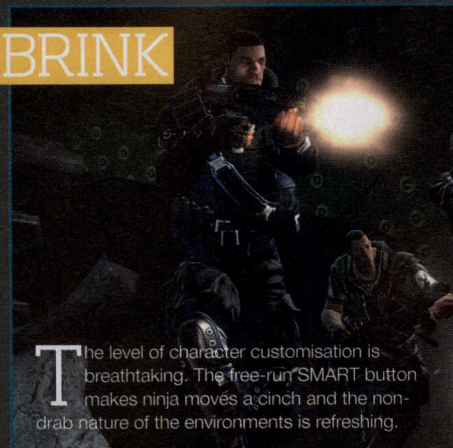
MEDAL OF HONOR

We scored some multiplayer hands-on and were very impressed. Customising three mods for each weapon is super addictive. As is earning Tier 1 status (beard get).



BRINK

The level of character customisation is breathtaking. The free-run SMART button makes ninja moves a cinch and the non-drab nature of the environments is refreshing.



HUNTED

We walked out of our *Hunted* demo with a much greater respect for it. The gory, two player co-op shenanigans seem pretty solid. The visuals aren't all there yet though.



RAGE

The gunplay is great, the mutants and environments ooze puss and atmosphere (respectively). The driving sections, while solid, did seem a little tacked-on. Early days yet.



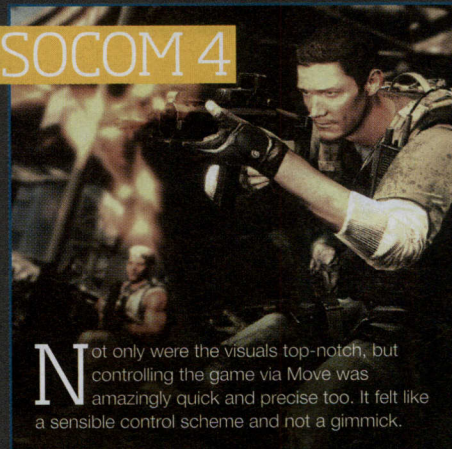
FINAL FANTASY XIV

Wow. This sure is going to eat up some hours. We tried a four-player quest in this, witnessed some huge environs and killed a giant enemy crab. Still a bit sissy though.



SOCOM 4

Not only were the visuals top-notch, but controlling the game via Move was amazingly quick and precise too. It felt like a sensible control scheme and not a gimmick.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM 3: FATE OF TWO WORLDS

This game moves like a hummingbird of some description. It looks a treat and the re-jigged controls keep the action fast and fierce. No new characters shown. Boo-urns.



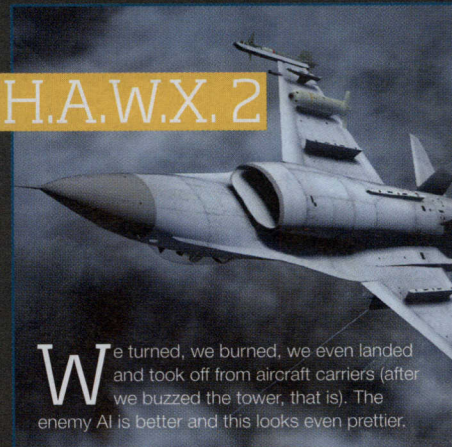
DJ HERO 2

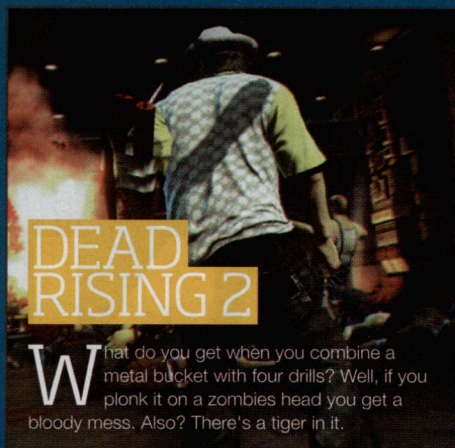
This was sounding wi-wi-wi-wicked. Freestyle sections now allow you to mix and scratch freely between the two tracks and with a mic you can add in lyrics. Sha-mone!



H.A.W.X. 2

We turned, we burned, we even landed and took off from aircraft carriers (after we buzzed the tower, that is). The enemy AI is better and this looks even prettier.





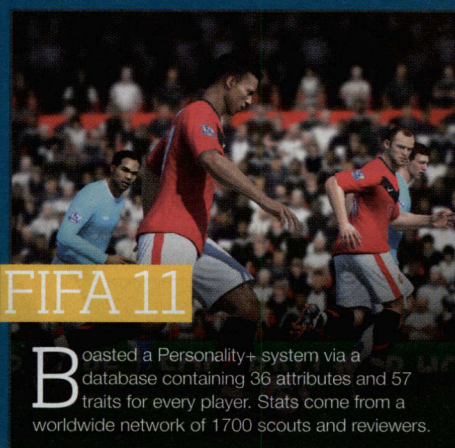
DEAD RISING 2

What do you get when you combine a metal bucket with four drills? Well, if you plonk it on a zombies head you get a bloody mess. Also? There's a tiger in it.

TRUE CRIME: HONG KONG



Gameplay-wise this has progressed nicely since we saw an early version of it in Vancouver. Stylishly unloading bullets when riding a sportsbike over traffic is a real thrill.



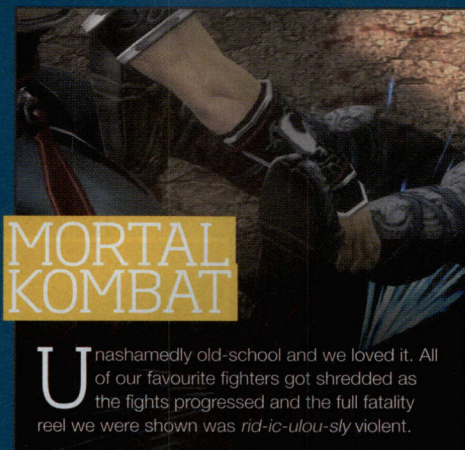
FIFA 11

Boasted a Personality+ system via a database containing 36 attributes and 57 traits for every player. Stats come from a worldwide network of 1700 scouts and reviewers.

F1 2010



Holy crap did this look good and have an amazing sense of speed! We've never seen a racing game with better wet weather. Aiming towards sim-fans.



MORTAL KOMBAT

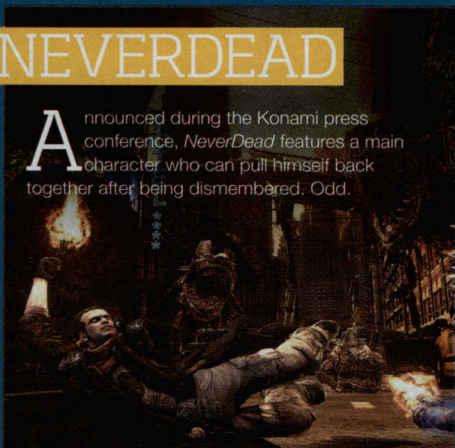
Unashamedly old-school and we loved it. All of our favourite fighters got shredded as the fights progressed and the full fatality reel we were shown was *rid-ic-ulou-sly* violent.



GUITAR HERO: WARRIORS OF ROCK

The hardcore nature of the set list was greatly appreciated, but beyond the lifted-from-*Brütal Legend* quest mode this paled in comparison to *Rock Band 3*.

NEVERDEAD



Announced during the Konami press conference, *NeverDead* features a main character who can pull himself back together after being dismembered. Odd.



GAME OF THE SHOW

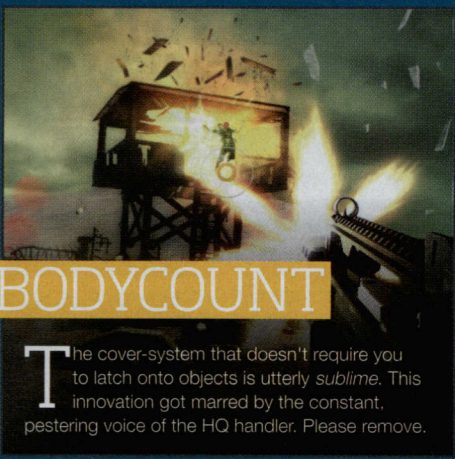
AND THE WINNER IS...

DEUS EX: HUMAN REVOLUTION

This just as easily could've gone to *Gran Turismo 5*, but to be fair *GT5*'s been kicking around for a while and has *always* impressed us. No, we'll give Game of the Show to this baby: *Deus Ex: Human Revolution*. We're frothing at the mouth waiting for another hands-on with it. It's *that* good. Believe it.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Gran Turismo 5: Best visuals **Portal 2:** Most surprising announcement **Mafia II:** Best gratuitous smut **Driver: San Francisco:** Best multiplayer **Mortal Kombat/Dead Rising 2:** Goriest game (tie) **Hottest booth (as in, literally the most sauna-like):** THQ's *Homefront* cave **Biggest line jump:** Being scooted past 60-or-so journos who had been waiting half a day to play *Mortal Kombat* **Best freebie:** Tier 1 sunnies for *Medal of Honor*



BODYCOUNT

The cover-system that doesn't require you to latch onto objects is utterly *sublime*. This innovation got marred by the constant, pestering voice of the HQ handler. Please remove.

SNAP DECISION

Heavy Rain makes decisions easy. All it takes is the tap of a button and you're set. In fact, it's so simple we'd like to see it applied to, well, everything. Read on for a few examples

WORDS: ADAM MATHEW

1 CHOOSE THE FORM OF THE DESTRUCTOR

Now this is a predicament. You and your fellow Ghostbusters have just made it to the top Dana Barrett's apartment, you've vaporised Gozer (by crossing more streams than an overcrowded urinal) and you now have to deal with a very dangerous ultimatum.

The offer on the table: choose the form of the thing that is going to kill you. What materialises next will depend greatly upon what type of person you are. If you're a 'glass is half full' kind of person, you may soon be set upon by giant, honey-hurling lesbians. Conversely, if you've watched too many horror movies – you're about to die by the hands/claws/proboscis of some truly, truly horrible crap. What's your call?



2 "SIR, SHOULD WE BLOCK UP THAT EXHAUST PORT?"

It's tough being the boss of a moon-sized space station; endless budget meetings, monsters clogging your trash compactors, about a thousand fire drills a month. You're a busy guy and you can't micro-manage every single thing unless your minions throw you a fricken bone. You need the info.

Let's say then, that you get a memo detailing a slight design flaw on the arse-end of your superweapon; a minor metal poopchute that's bugger-all metres wide. It's a tiny, wee weakness – but a weakness nonetheless.

What you do next may seem like a paltry decision in the scheme of things. But the trick is to think before taking the high road or the low one. Because the wrong option can really ruin your day.



3

"SIRE, THERE'S THIS HORSE OUTSIDE..."

A word to the wise; nobody likes losing. No one. It would seem suspicious then that after 100 solid days of slaughtering them, your retreating enemies should leave a gift. Who does that?! Check your newsagent today for a section in the Hallmark cards labelled "Thanks for kicking my arse". It ain't there.

Anyhoo, none of that changes the fact that there's still this massive wooden horse outside. It looks kind of cool too; those Greeks can't siege worth a damn – but man, can they sculpt. To maximise your positive Feng Shui you could position it right next to the main gate controls. No, seriously – you could just wheel that bitch straight in here.

Who else is keen?

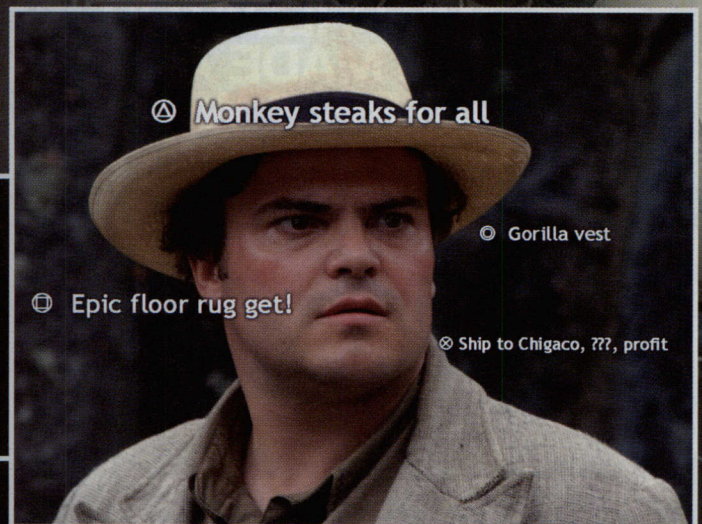
4

"WE JUST GASSED KING KONG. UH, NOW WHAT?"

It's pretty amazing to stumble across a 25-foot, pissed gorilla in the mist. But what's more impressive is that you managed to capture it unhurt and alive by simply gassing him into unconsciousness. Personally, we'd have shot him in the groin with a cannon – RSPCA and monkey sperm-count *be damned*.

All right then, you've felled the beast, adequately restrained him with some fishing wire tied in a double bow and your boat can carry him to any port in the world. Things to consider: you spent a packet getting here, the families of the dead crew members are initiating legal proceedings and you haven't eaten anything for two days.

What to do, what to do?



5

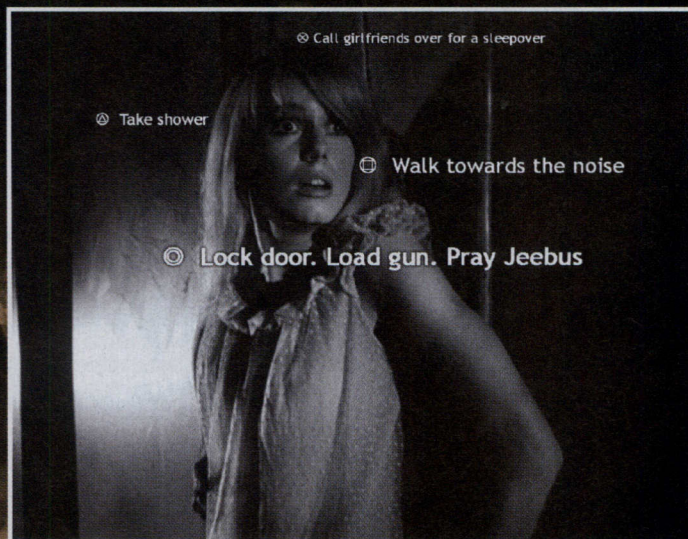
YOU'VE INVENTED SENTIENT AI! NOW WHAT?

Great Scott, you've done it! After a horrific adolescence – spent studying, being force-fed urinal cakes and getting taunted for your nerdish appearance – you've discovered a way to make computer chips think for themselves.

This is a momentous day. Why, a year from now you could be walking into a house full of appliances that greet you like you're a special guest star on the set of *Cheers*. Yes it IS a good morning, television! What's up, ceiling fan? I'll stay frosty if you will, fridge.

Sure, every busted washing machine would feel like a death in the family, but such an invention could only have non-evil applications to make all our lives better. Right? Right?





⊗ Call girlfriends over for a sleepover

⊗ Take shower

⊗ Walk towards the noise

⊗ Lock door. Load gun. Pray Jeebus

6

THERE'S A SERIAL KILLER ON THE LOOSE AND NOISES OUTSIDE...

Well, this is odd; you were gabbing on the phone to Sally when the line just went dead. After some quick troubleshooting (saying "hello?" into the receiver 17 times) you figure the thunderstorm must have brought down a phone line. The house plunges into darkness and you upgrade that assumption to "just a very localised blackout". Because hey, your neighbours still have power. That's, like, totally weird, huh?

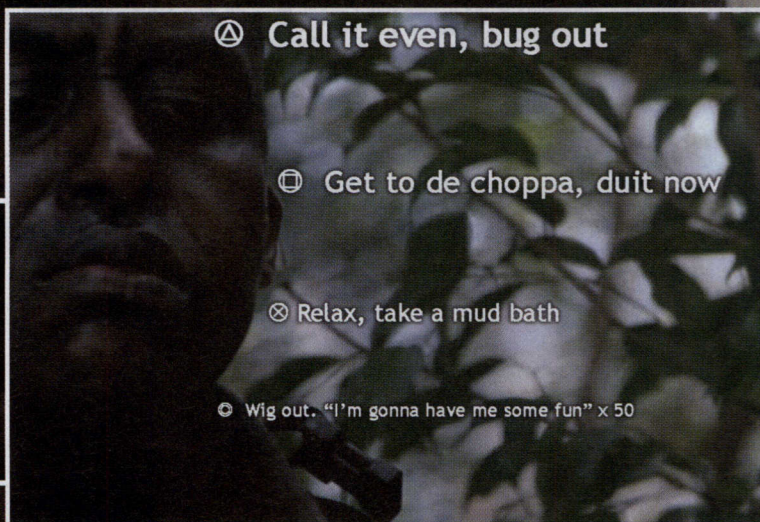
Then you hear the scraping noise in the basement. You know the basement; that dark, musty room where you recently hosted a Ouija board party after finding those ancient Indian arrow heads. You grab a flashlight and the phrase, "Is anybody there?" hangs in the back of your throat. Your move.

7

THE PREDATOR HAS MADE A RETREAT, WHAT NOW?

Ain't no way for no soldier to die. After a successful counter-terrorist mission, you and the remaining members of the Special Forces team are mighty spooked. There's something out there in the jungle hunting you and happily turning all your buddies into meat piñatas.

Like some sort of hairless Ewok on steroids, your commanding officer makes a booby trap that successfully catches your nemesis off guard. Hurt and confused this... *predator*... runs off deep into the jungle. Soaked with adrenalin your thoughts are a swirling miasma of hatred, fear, decades of elite military training, hatred, and an endlessly repeating, kinda catchy Little Richard Song. What do you do, Sergeant?



⊗ Call it even, bug out

⊗ Get to de choppa, duit now

⊗ Relax, take a mud bath

⊗ Wig out. "I'm gonna have me some fun" x 50



⊗ Engage hover-mode

← Go left

→ your other left

⊗ Give iceberg the finger, accelerate

8

"AN ICEBERG IS APPROACHING CAPTAIN, YOUR ORDERS?"

"Thank God for the modern auto-pilot!", you say to yourself. Inside the command deck of the SS Titanic is a complex rigging of a steering wheel tied to a rope and a brick, and there's a chicken listening to incoming Morse code warnings (whilst pecking out a few of its own).

You, Captain, are hanging out at the rear of the ship. You've got a stash of contraband materials hidden in one of the lifeboats – moonshine, cigars, porn, what have you – and you're taking your sweet time enjoying them. Just then your drunken, pants-less reverie is shattered by a chimp delivering a Morse coded message from your chicken co-pilot.

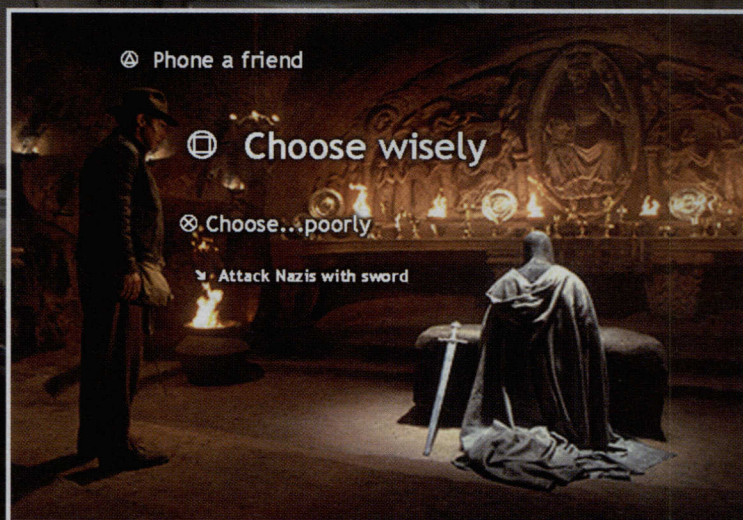
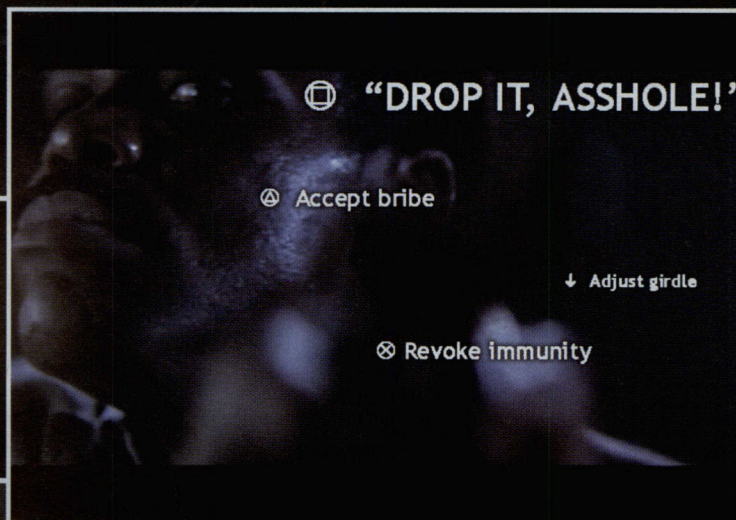
You got precious little time: choose!

9

ARE YOU A LETHAL WEAPON?

After much bloodshed and awesome gunplay you now have the evil Arjen Rudd in your sights. This is the guy that threatened your family, murdered your fellow cops, shot Riggs and tried to kill you by strapping your thunderbox with C4. If *anybody* deserves to get a blowhole installed his forehead, it's *this* douchebag.

There's a problem though. Rudd is also the minister of affairs for the South African Consulate, which means he can invoke "dip-lo-matic immunity" and report you to the State Department. Or something. We're not sure how this stuff works. Ultimately though, the question at hand is: are you a cop tonight, or is this personal?



10

"INDIANA, IT'S TIME TO CHOOSE A GRAIL"

This is it. The search for the Grail is the search for the divine in all of us, and it's a bang-up excuse to hang around with your dad for a few days. This is all the more awesome when your dad is Sean Connery.

But if you want an answer as to which grail is the correct one, we've none to give you. Sorry. Whatever the case, you had certainly better choose wisely, for while the true Grail will bring you life, the false Grail will make you deader than disco.

But push that minor issue aside. Your dad is leaking claret as we speak – so step up and take a slurp. Pro tip: it's not *that* vessel – that's the Grail Knight's chamber pot.

11

YOUR BUDDIES AWAIT YOUR NEXT MOVE IN HUSHED AWE

The voice on your left shoulder warbles noticeably as it asks, "Doesn't this look a little bit steep to you?". Almost instantaneously the voice on your right shoulder cackles its retort, "Rubbish! The boy can't trust his perceptions at this altitude". Being eight you don't understand the word 'perception', or 'altitude', but you do know that the owner of the first voice shows all the telltale signs of being a pussy.

As if sensing your recognition of this fact, the right-hand voice takes dominance and increases in volume. "You've had eight years already, grandpa – do you want to live forever?", the gravely, hypnotic voice hisses. Without pausing, you put your thoughts into action.





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PlayStation
Network

**WHAT'S THE POINT
OF BEING GOOD
IF NO-ONE KNOWS IT?**



singstar

THE GAME IS JUST THE START

*SingStar Chart Hits on PS3 features 30 hot songs including hits from Lady Gaga, The Pussycat Dolls, Guy Sebastian, 30H!3, Wolfmother and more – but that's just the start! Start downloading more songs from the SingStore, just \$2.45 each. Start uploading your SingStar performances to My SingStar Online. Start getting a whole lot more from your console.

PG

Mild Coarse
Language and
Sexual References



PS3

PlayStation 3

SingStar Chart Hits
- instore July 1.



SONY
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THIS ISSUE

- 68** Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker
- 72** Alpha Protocol
- 73** Blur
- 74** Naughty Bear
- 75** Green Day: Rock Band
- 75** LEGO Harry Potter: Years 1-4
- 76** Demon's Souls
- 77** World of Outlaws: Sprint Cars
- 77** Toy Story 3
- 78** Clash of the Titans

“This is a solid package that **no gamer should miss**”

68 METAL GEAR SOLID: PEACEWALKER

Give peace a chance

REVIEW RATINGS

PlayStation
**GOLD
AWARD**

10 Incredible: Perfection is relative and elusive, and no game will ever be perfect. Our 10 doesn't mean a game is flawless, it means a game has done everything it set out to do in an incredible fashion and thus it deserves our highest possible kudos.

PlayStation
**SILVER
AWARD**

9 Excellent: An outstanding game, either limited by its scope, sequel status (and lack of improvement) or a few too many minor blemishes from being a 10. Likely one of the best in its genre, a 9 comes with high praise.

PlayStation
**BRONZE
AWARD**

8 Great: Still well ahead of the pack in most departments, despite a few issues here and there. Thoroughly recommended.

7 Good: A robust package that does a solid job despite a handful of mild to moderate problems. Enjoyable in parts, just not fantastic overall.

6 Decent: This game will have some noticeable flaws that may make it hard to recommend to those who aren't fans of the genre, but it will do more right than it does wrong. Just.

5 Mediocre: A conceded pass, if you know what we mean. Half okay, but half-busted. Might scrape by for fans, but with the quality games we do have, there's no need to drop real money on a game that half sucks.

4 Poor: Anything below 5, strictly speaking, is a fail – but there are degrees of 'bad' just as there are degrees of 'good'. A 4 is unrefined, partially broken and poorly designed.

3 Very disappointing: Things start to go very wrong here – fundamentally flawed in many ways, boring and close to pointless.

2 Terrible: Nothing good here, and definitely not worth removing the wrapper.

1 The worst: Reserved for the very worst gaming could ever offer. A broken, offensive mess without a single redeeming quality. If a 10 is better than virtually every game available, a 1 is worse than virtually every game available. *OPS* has handed out this score only once: hello *Leisure Suit Larry: Box Office Bust!*



- 50%** Abducting sleeping soldiers
- 30%** Dying, over and over and over
- 15%** Playing drums to 'Basket Case'
- 5%** Watching teddies commit suicide



We choose to review our games on a super-slick Full HD 1080p 40" Sony Bravia for the best picture possible.

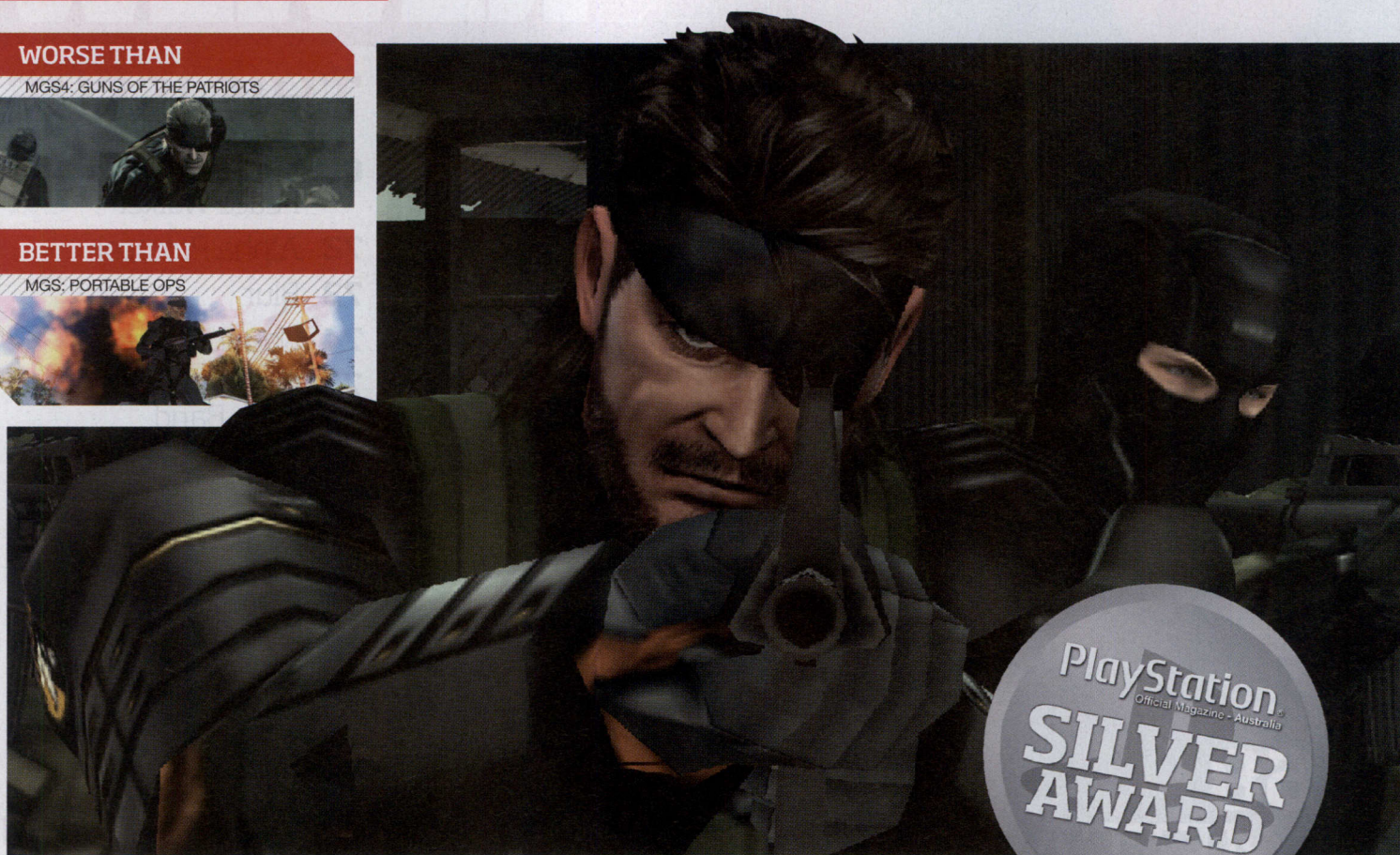
WORSE THAN

MGS4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS



BETTER THAN

MGS: PORTABLE OPS

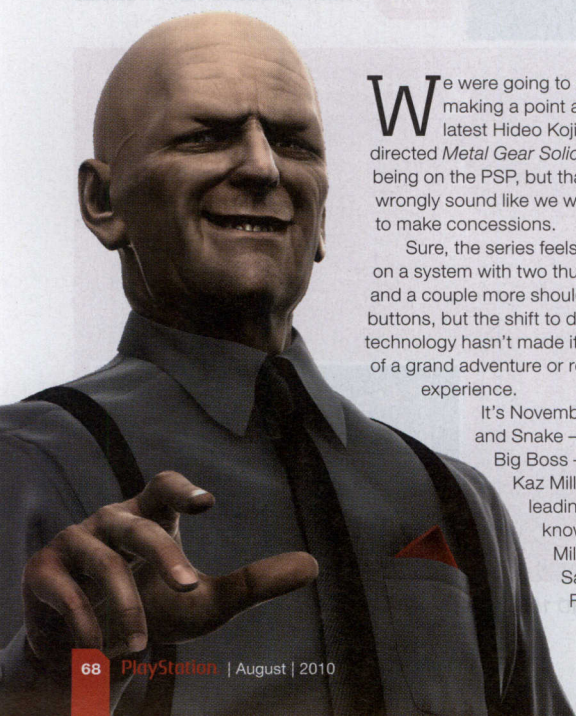


INFO

FORMAT: PSP | **GENRE:** ACTION | **RELEASE:** NOW | **DISTRIBUTOR:** MINDSCAPE
DEVELOPER: KONAMI | **PLAYERS:** 1-6 | **RRP:** \$69.95

METAL GEAR SOLID: PEACE WALKER

Get ready to make like Snake



We were going to start by making a point about this latest Hideo Kojima-directed *Metal Gear Solid* title being on the PSP, but that would wrongly sound like we were going to make concessions.

Sure, the series feels at home on a system with two thumbsticks and a couple more shoulder buttons, but the shift to different technology hasn't made it any less of a grand adventure or robust experience.

It's November 1974, and Snake – a.k.a. Big Boss – with Kaz Miller are leading a group known as Militaires Sans Frontières

(Soldiers Without Borders, but MSF for short), an outfit designed to aid those who need help. *Metal Gear Solid: A-Team*, then.

A Columbian professor with his 16-year-old student, Paz, soon approach the two of them to rid Costa Rica of an invading force. Since the country can't constitutionally have its own army they're pretty much defenceless. Snake's initially uninterested, but the prof plays him a tape of what sounds like The Boss – Snake's mentor that he killed at the end of *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater* – alive and well. Plus, there's the threat of all out nuclear war lurking in the background.

Thus the rabbit hole begins. Of course, things are never what they seem, and you're soon embroiled in a tangle involving a drug-running guerrilla outfit, the KGB and the CIA. That said the storyline is pretty uncomplicated for a *Metal Gear* game. As with the rest of the game information is dropped when you've had just enough time to comprehend and absorb what's going in, and *Peace Walker*

deftly avoids leaving players running back and forwards to Wikipedia to figure out just what the hell's going on.

If you haven't played *Snake Eater* you will feel a little disconnected from the storyline at times, and a few references to some character's relationships won't have the same impact. Although you're going to be more rewarded if you're aware of who Big Boss is in relation to The Boss this is by no means an excuse for not playing *Peace Walker*. It is an absolute blast.

This will be a slow-burning title for many. Newcomers – if you exist – and those with a passing interest won't be immediately absorbed, and veterans may struggle through the first few levels. Once you've snuck around, made a few headshots and become used to the controls, the tipping point into full-blown addiction comes nearly two hours into a 20-plus hour title. These early hours include watching several cutscenes (between levels) that last five minutes or so, and restarting a



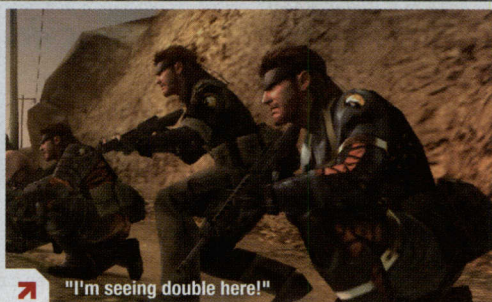
“Voice acting is, as you’d expect, **totally top-notch**”



Time to make like a tree



“Yo dawg! We heard you iike RPGs...”



“I'm seeing double here!”

few times. That in-game counter soon ticks over; make sure your charger is close by.

Levels are broken down into small sub-areas, and the environment changes from jungle, to ruins, onto a waterfall, inside military bases and beyond as the story progresses. Visually it's not beautiful, but it's totally atmospheric – and the sound design is stellar. Birdcalls echo in the background, gunshots are alarming after you've spent an age with the soft 'pfft' of your tranquilliser gun. Voice acting is, as you'd expect, totally top-notch.

Levels aren't just monotonous sneakathons (though prepare to refine your motor skills in your left thumb as running makes a lot of noise); boss fights are action packed, needing quick reflexes as well as sound tactics. You'll be glad to reach them and they make perfect bookends after a few levels of not making any noise at all.

Cutscenes are the medium for most of the story exposition, using the in-game engine though predominantly are lush hand-drawn illustrations by Ashley Wood, an acclaimed Australian artist who also inked the *Metal Gear Solid* comics (see 'Woodwork'). Like many *Metal Gear* games cutscenes go on for a while but they look amazing.

It's impossible to just play the story missions – Main Ops – alone from start to finish, as your base needs occasional attention between endeavours. Extra Ops – side missions – are your first distraction, missions that range from simple target practice, *Metal Gear Solid VR*-style skirmishes, to full-on sorties that tie up a few loose ends and also just give the chance to do more: more sneaking, more shooting, and more capturing.

Along with your stun rod and tranquilliser pistol, the Fulton Recovery System is a mission must-have (bar a few boss battles and

occasional shooting galleries). After knocking out a guard or discovering an inert POW, Snake can attach a balloon-cum-parachute to a prone body where they're then launched into the air and taken back to base to be 'recruited' into your burgeoning army. *Metal Gear Solid: Kidnappers, Inc.* then.

You only have a limited number of these per mission, and it's not compulsory to stick it in your inventory. The Fulton isn't just for drafting recruits; a sleeping guard is soon found and then woken by another patrolling nearby, and they'll come hunting for you if you haven't hidden the evidence. Everyone who lands at the base has abilities in certain areas, be it combat, R&D, medical, accruing intel and even culinary. Hey, an army's gotta eat, and the more chefs you have serving food, the higher morale is and the better everyone performs. *Metal Gear Solid: Masterchef*, sort of.

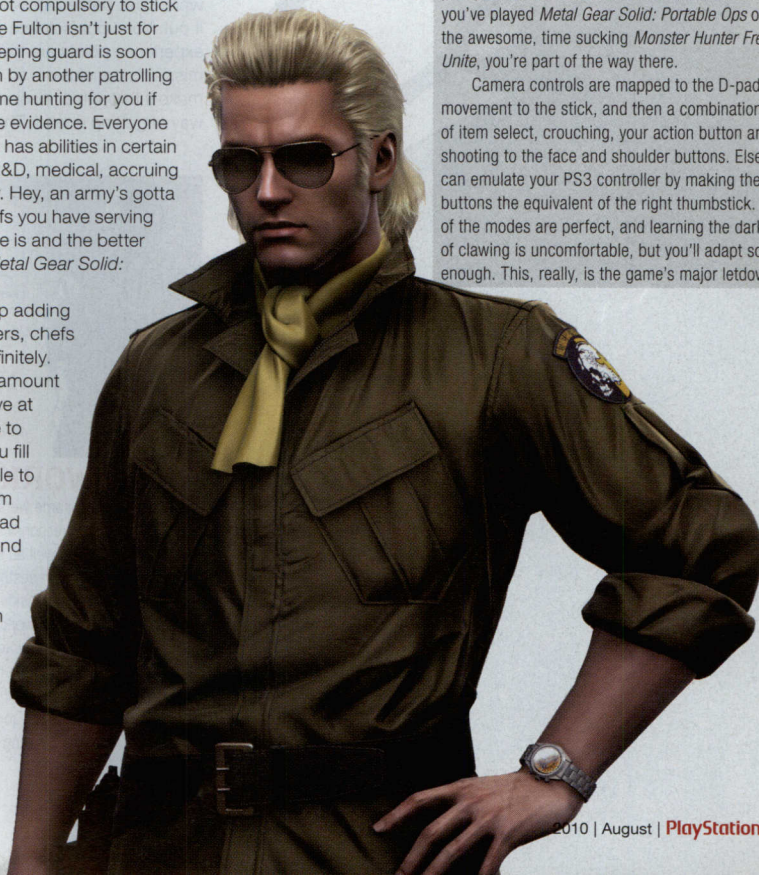
You can't just keep adding to your stable of fighters, chefs and researchers indefinitely. There's a limit on the amount of people you can have at the base, so you have to make decisions as you fill your stable. You're able to fire recruits, trade them with other players via ad hoc connection, or send them off to war in the Outer Ops mode.

Chuck a maximum of eight soldiers into a unit (Alpha through to Hotel regiments) and then pit them against opposing forces.

IN THE WAY OF CONTROL

After installing the game (you're given the chance to do either a small install of around 300MB, or a larger one of around 800MB) to enable radio contact and cut down on loading times (go for the larger one if you have space on your Memory Stick), you can pick your control scheme from a choice of three. If you've played *Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops* or even the awesome, time sucking *Monster Hunter Freedom Unite*, you're part of the way there.

Camera controls are mapped to the D-pad, movement to the stick, and then a combination of item select, crouching, your action button and shooting to the face and shoulder buttons. Else, you can emulate your PS3 controller by making the face buttons the equivalent of the right thumbstick. None of the modes are perfect, and learning the dark art of clawing is uncomfortable, but you'll adapt soon enough. This, really, is the game's major letdown.



It's the perfect disguise



TAPE THAT!

Before each mission you can learn more about the environment you're about to fight in, the enemies you're going to come across or even a bit about each character's background by listening to their tapes – this is the early days of the Sony Walkman, though the first commercially available machine went on sale a few years later. There's dozens and dozens of hours of dialogue here, and it would be very easy to just while away an afternoon listening to these recordings.

“Buy this game immediately – and a PSP if you must”

You'll never actually see the battles, only the results of who shot whom. During certain boss battles you can even capture the commander of the military vehicle that's trying to kill you, and then pinch it to stick in with the aforementioned units. Man vs chopper might sound like an awesome action movie but it's a sure way of having your ranks decimated.

In-house soldiers boost your research currency, GMP, used for making better versions of weapons and researching new ones. The more experienced soldiers are (by winning Outer Ops challenges, or taking part in Extra Ops in place of Snake) the more GMP they generate. Starting to get the picture? It's an ecology that adds a whole other level of tactics, and is enjoyable and engrossing.

Although you could play the whole game from start to finish on your own, you'd miss out on the co-op, er, Co-Ops missions via ad-hoc connection. Most missions allow for two soldiers to progress through the story, while boss battles allow for up to four to battle it out. Your loot (soldiers you've abducted) and experience points are given to all parties at a mission's conclusion, so if you're struggling to make it through a mission intact this is a sound way of getting ahead. There are some items,

like the various cardboard boxes, that can only be used with two people so you really owe it to yourself to get involved with multiplayer.

There's also a Versus mode for up to six combatants, and the more the better. Rounds take place within recognisable levels, whether it's deathmatch, capture the flag or otherwise. However, Co-Ops is the way to spend the bulk of your time with friends.

Are you a fan of *Metal Gear*? Do you appreciate outstanding production values that envelope a dense parcel of twisting, weaving gameplay? If you answered 'yes' to either of those questions, our ultimatum is simple. Buy this game immediately – and a PSP if you must. As well as unfurling the *Metal Gear* story just that little bit more, and spending more quality time with Snake, it's a truly excellent game in its own right. Engaging and rewarding, this is a solid package that no gamer should miss. **Paul Taylor**



WOODWORK

Ashley Wood is a name we should see a lot more of. He's the artist responsible for the *Metal Gear Solid 2* comics, as well as the series' digital comics on the PSN. While an aesthetic detail should come secondary in consideration to the quality of gameplay, Wood's work is astounding. Plus, some cutscenes are interactive. Some are (very forgiving) QTEs, others allow you to zoom in on characters while some allow you to go further and have X-ray vision for, uh, titillating results.

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

A slick interface with sharp graphics, but you'll be in awe of the way modes unlock and progress.

SOUND

Environmental sound effects and voice acting that make many PS3 games jealous.

CONTROLS

A bit dicky to start with, but master one set out of the three control schemes and you're laughing.

REPLAY VALUE

Getting the 'S' rank on all missions will eat up your spare time, and there's always multiplayer.

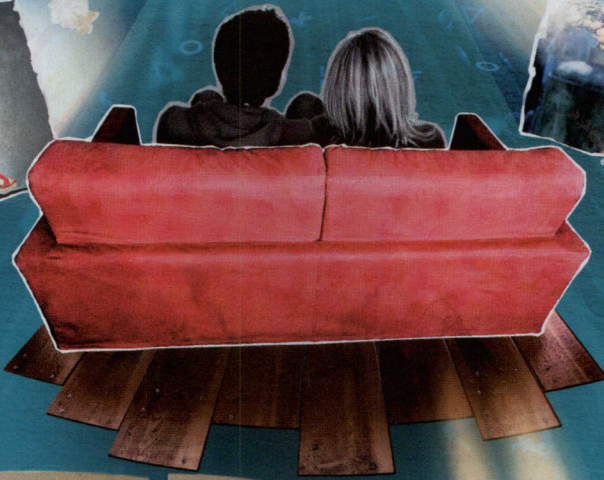
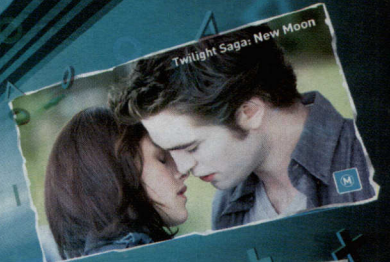
VERDICT: Polished, well-produced and thought-out, this is a must have. The story's great and the action's addictive.

9



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5

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0

R3

Iron Man: M (Action, violence), Inglourious Basterds: MA (Strong violence), Jennifer's Body MA (Strong horror, violence and sexual references), Twilight Saga: New Moon: M (Supernatural themes and violence), Ninja Assassin: R18+ (High impact violence), Sherlock Holmes: M (Violence).



PS3™

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WORSE THAN

TRUE LIES



BETTER THAN

JOHNNY ENGLISH



Face!



Che Guevara never felt entirely comfortable during job interviews



Laser tag < paintball



He'll miss from this range

INFO

FORMAT: PS3 | **GENRE:** ACTION RPG | **RELEASE:** NOW | **DISTRIBUTOR:** SEGA
DEVELOPER: OBSDIAN ENTERTAINMENT | **PLAYERS:** 1 | **RRP:** \$99.95

ALPHA PROTOCOL

Spy another day

A CLOSE SHAVE

Another odd element of *Alpha Protocol* is the character customisation. Not that it exists, just rather when it actually happens. You get to fart around with Thornton's appearance, but only after you've played the first level. All this meant for us was that our Thornton went from a clean-shaven douchebag to a fully-bearded douchebag within three minutes – and nobody was any the wiser. It's like we walked out the back and glued fistfuls of pubes to our face.

We're still not sure how *Alpha Protocol* turned out to be such a dud, but a dud it most definitely is.

If you'll pardon the platitude, *Alpha Protocol* is packed with potential. It's got a developer behind the scenes that's been trusted with a variety of high-profile projects in the past, like *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic II* and *Fallout: New Vegas*. It has spies in it. The idea of a choice-driven RPG combined with a third-person action game set in the world of international espionage is a very good one.

Unfortunately, Obsidian couldn't nail the recipe. At all. It's the ingredients. They're all sour.

At its core *Alpha Protocol* feels like *Dragon Age* crossed with *Syphon Filter*. When you're not shooting people and kicking them in the neck you're chatting and shuffling through dossiers. Unlike *Dragon Age*, *Alpha Protocol* has full speech for all characters, including the player character – Michael Thornton. The gimmick is that you can drive the tone of these conversations, and the outcome of the whole game, by your own choices.

Conversations are steered by whether you choose to be aggressive, professional, or suave. We can't deny that the foundations of a good dialogue system aren't here, because they are. Obsidian laid a solid slab for this game. Unfortunately, what it laid on the slab amounts to a colled turd.

Thornton himself is the biggest problem. His script is terrible, and the delivery isn't much better. Thornton's attitude barely changes, regardless of how you make him act. The

developers never hesitated to compare each of the three approaches to the three JB's (Bourne, Bauer and Bond), but Thornton isn't fit to fetch any of these guys a moist towlette.

Obsidian has interpreted 'be an aggressive hardcase' as 'be an obnoxious brat' and, when it comes to suave, Thornton is about as subtle as sexual assault. It doesn't help that his voice is about as intimidating as a slightly larger-than-usual cupcake. Basically Thornton is a jerkbag in need of a major identity realignment.

If you're hoping the action itself will make up for the half-cocked narrative portions and a dick of a main character, the news is worse still. At its best the action is bone average. At its worst, however, it's sensationally awful.

Enemy AI is a complete debacle, the cover system is a shambles and paint-by-numbers level design befuddles. It's packed with annoying quirks, like disappearing bodies (even simply tranquillised ones) and time limits for lockpicking. Why do conventional, analogue locks have time limits to pick them? Shouldn't it just take as long as it takes? It's like having a time limit for tying your shoes.

Despite these flaws, it's really the ham-fisted way the RPG elements have been shoehorned into the experience that will have people switching it off in droves. All it means is that often your bullets will miss even if your reticule was bang on target.

Holding the reticule on your target longer and levelling-up will both increase your accuracy, but at the beginning of the game it's near impossible to tolerate. Asking us to

buy that the latest inductee into a top-secret agency for super spies couldn't hit a bull in the arse with a bucket of wheat is a serious stretch. The experience suffers massively. *Alpha Protocol* should've made us feel powerful and deadly from the outset. Rather, it simply makes you feel useless and outclassed.

Just like this game. **Luke Reilly**

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

Doesn't look like a 2010 game. Also, features the most unconvincing bushranger beard ever. Nice disguise chump.

SOUND

Bodgy voice acting, and nothing particularly memorable elsewhere.

CONTROLS

What is more awful than not hitting what you're aiming at? RPG or not, this is dumber than a bag of hammers.

REPLAY VALUE

There are a host of different endings, but that means nought if you didn't enjoy the first time through.

VERDICT

A fantastic concept marred by poor execution and a lead with all the charm of a wet newspaper.

5



INFO

FORMAT: PS3 | GENRE: RACING | RELEASE: NOW | DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION | DEVELOPER: BIZARRE CREATIONS | PLAYERS: 1-20 | RRP: \$109.95

Head on in 3, 2, 1...

BLUR

Get your neon, er, on

Powered-up racing is this racer's tagline, referring to the weapons and, well, power-ups that lay strategically across the track as you try to reach the finish line as stylishly as possible. Style, however, isn't just powerslides and big jumps; you have to utterly smash the competition.

Battles are hard fought and satisfying when you understand how the eight power-ups work in what situation, and the way they can cancel each other out. Some have a dual purpose, firing backwards as well as forwards; a well-timed reverse nitro slows your car to a crawl for super-tight turns, before blasting you forward again. It's a neat touch.

Blur has a lot in common with an unlikely publisher stablemate *Modern Warfare 2*. There's a mod system that gives situation-specific benefits like extra health, faster respawns, better shields, increased firepower and so on. You can only equip three at a time, one from each category, and as you unlock

more you're have to think carefully about what your loadout's going to be.

It's a package that's more about tactics than you ever thought would be possible in a racer, so winning by managing your inventory of powerups and mods is a sweet moment, though at times you'll be absolutely punished because you were literally half a second too late in grabbing a shield or repair, spoiling an otherwise dream run. Being relegated to the back of the pack in a 20-car race because you were unlucky rather than unskilled is a cheap move.

These minor issues are compounded because the racing itself sucks. Bizarre Creations has made wonderful racing games in the past on other consoles so it's odd that it didn't ape its own work and make this just as addictive. The physics in *Blur* are too stiff and unsatisfying. Things get better with faster cars but too often it feels like you're trying to guide a brick through thick porridge. Drifting just shouldn't this much of a chore, and we constantly crave more momentum when we're loosening up the rear wheels. Online's more attractive (more on page 82) as these problems are masked by the thrill of the chase.

Blur has a lot going for it. Its online play, integration and community aspects should be admired, alongside its attitude and graphics. It's never been easier to flaunt your latest unlock in-game with Twitter and Facebook access built in, and you're even able to challenge a PSN friend to beat your latest achievement for ultimate bragging rights once you're past the chequered flag. It even has four-player splitscreen, and we'd like more developers to take heed of this. A shame, then, that as a racing game it fails the fun test.

Paul Taylor

Corvette, meet the Stargate portal



Chevrons: the word no-one really remembers



WORSE THAN

SPLIT/SECOND



BETTER THAN

MIDNIGHT CLUB: LOS ANGELES



FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

Neon rules, and it all looks very pretty within a solid framerate

SOUND

Audio cues and explosions are bang on. Hit the XMB for your own music

CONTROLS

Battles are great fun, but nailing a drift is frustrating

REPLAY VALUE

Buy it for online play as career mode is mostly dull

VERDICT

A race to powerups rather than a racer with powerups, *Blur* sorely needs better drift physics.

7



➤ He's only going to axe you once

INFO

FORMAT: PS3 | GENRE: ACTION | RELEASE: NOW | DISTRIBUTOR: AIE
DEVELOPER: ARTIFICIAL MIND AND MOVEMENT | PLAYERS: 1-4 | RRP: \$109.95

NAUGHTY BEAR

You know what he said about killing you last? He lied



If *Naughty Bear* featured people rather than stuffed bears it would probably be the most violent game ever made.

Naughty Bear is *Manhunt* in a pre-school paradise. Underneath the saccharine-sweet skin of *Naughty Bear* beats a homicidal heart of pure, unadulterated evil. We'd be little disturbed if it wasn't so hilarious.

Naughty Bear is a fairly straightforward blend of brawling and stealth. The gimmick is A2M has juxtaposed the idyllic world and the cute-as-a-button cast with stunningly sadistic ultra violence.

Players take on the role of Naughty Bear, a bear driven (by the narrator) to seek vengeance upon his fellow bears after he was shunned from a big birthday party. The idea is to inflict as much *physical and psychological harm* upon the others bears as possible. A points system scores your performance as you wade through each level; the more creative you are the more points you'll get.

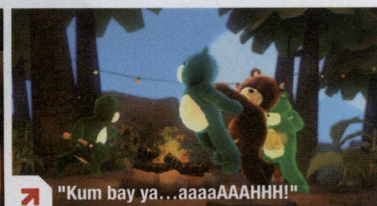
Simply beating a bear to death, for instance, is small time. Better ideas include setting a bear trap to snare them, scaring bears rather than killing them, or sabotaging fuse boxes and BBQs to lure bears out and make them vulnerable. Doing this kind of stuff, as well as *executing, gutting and bludgeoning* bears with the host of available weapons, all build more points. For maximum points, scare other bears enough that they eventually *commit suicide right in front of your eyes*.

The biggest problem with *Naughty Bear* is, while it's subversive, unique and wildly imaginative, it's flawed in a few crucial areas.

The camera is the worst offender. It isn't beyond managing, but it could've been more cooperative. As it stands, it's far too cumbersome and requires adjusting too frequently.

It's not exactly a visual powerhouse either. The tone of the game doesn't lend itself to realistic environments, and developer A2M hasn't provided them. No complaints there. However, A2M didn't fully harness the cartoon feel *Naughty Bear* so clearly wants to capture. *Naughty Bear* would've looked wonderful with a more cel-shaded take on proceedings, like *The Simpsons Game* for instance. *Naughty Bear* has the attitude of a teddy bear version of *Itchy & Scratchy* but visually it's trapped in a middleware mire of bog-standard textures and models.

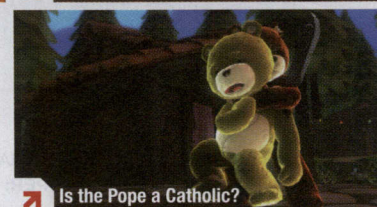
We also don't think it managed to stay fresh enough over the course of its duration.



➤ "Kum bay ya...aaaaAAHHH!"



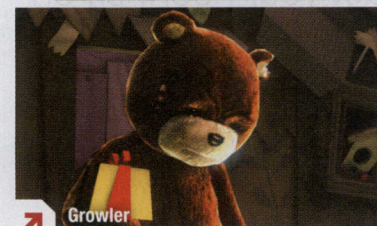
➤ It's his party and he'll die if he wants to



➤ Is the Pope a Catholic?



➤ Breaking cars with his bear hands



➤ Growler

Props to whoever it was at A2M or elsewhere that came up with this batshit bonkers idea of a game. *Naughty Bear* is a genuine example of thinking outside of the box – which is something we're seeing less and less of. Our criticisms of its faults stand but we welcome its arrival. **👉 Luke Reilly**

THE BEAR NECESSITIES

Three slightly more well-behaved bears than Naughty Bear.

THE BUNDY BEAR

Everyone loves a joker, although the Bundy Bear can be a little obnoxious at times. Most recently seen vandalising a barkeep's neon sign in order to bring his own alcohol in. Clearly exploits his presence as a deadly polar bear to his own ends.

BEAR GRYLLS

Cops the typical amount of shit from muckrakers who find the odd exaggeration in the myth that is Bear Grylls, but there's no getting around the fact we've seen him bite into a raw puff adder after *killing it with a stick*.

HUMPHREY B. BEAR

Anyone can win a Logie, but Humphrey B. Bear also won a special "Citizen of the Year" Award at the 1994 Australia Day. Beat that. Not bad for a dude who doesn't wear pants and can't actually communicate properly.



FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

Graphics are a little budget but the simple style works.

SOUND

The narrator grates after a while.

CONTROLS

A bit of an arm wrestle at times. Camera's a dud.

REPLAY VALUE

Experimenting with all the kills may take a short while.

VERDICT: Insane, unique and hilariously horrific. Flawed in a number of ways, but bold enough to warrant a look.

7

LEGO HARRY POTTER: YEARS 1-4

Hats off to Harry



INFO

FORMAT: PS3
GENRE:
 ADVENTURE
RELEASE: NOW
DISTRIBUTOR:
 WARNER BROS.
DEVELOPER:
 TRAVELLER'S TALES
PLAYERS: 1-2
RRP: \$89.95



If you've played any of the other LEGO games you'll know what to expect here.

This isn't a slight against *LEGO Harry Potter*. It's just an acknowledgment that there's a certain formula to the LEGO games, and that *LEGO Harry Potter* doesn't deviate too much from it. Judging by the abundance of LEGO games, however, the formula is working.

LEGO Harry Potter is a fully-featured package. As far as casual, family-orientated games go it has plenty going for it. It's stuffed to the gunwales with characters (140 or so of them, in fact) and littered corner to corner with fan service. There's more attention to detail in the backgrounds of *LEGO Harry Potter* than any LEGO game to date, and Harry Potheads will inhale every scrap of it like a bad habit.

There's more of a spotlight on exploration, puzzle-solving and building than combat in *LEGO Harry Potter*, as opposed to the biff-heavy *LEGO Batman*, *LEGO Indiana Jones* or *LEGO Star Wars*. It also goes without saying that, unlike its predecessors, there's a major focus on magic and spells.

Early on in the game Harry obviously won't have any spells, and he'll have to go to class to learn new abilities. By the time you get to

your fourth year, however, you'll find Harry, plus his classmates, are much more powerful.

The cute and glossy visuals get our thumbs up, and the tongue-in-cheek LEGO presentation remains as charming as ever. As is traditional in LEGO titles, the film's original score – or at least a key portion of it – is used to great effect.

What *LEGO Harry Potter* is, then, is most probably exactly what you're expecting. A robust yet simple homage to an international phenomenon unleashed upon the world via the medium of coloured, plastic bricks.

It's not going to give your PS3 an aneurism, but it may cause children to spontaneously combust in excitement.

— Luke Reilly

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

Fantastic attention to detail, even in LEGO form.

SOUND

Great atmosphere thanks to the original score.

CONTROLS

Straightforward as usual. Features co-op (as usual).

REPLAY VALUE

Lots to find if you're happy to grind away.

VERDICT

Still pretty simple, but arguably the most thorough LEGO universe yet.

7

GREEN DAY: ROCK BAND

Hitchin' a ride

INFO

FORMAT: PS3
GENRE: MUSIC
RELEASE: NOW
DISTRIBUTOR: EA
DEVELOPER:
 HARMONIX
PLAYERS: 1-6
RRP: \$49.95



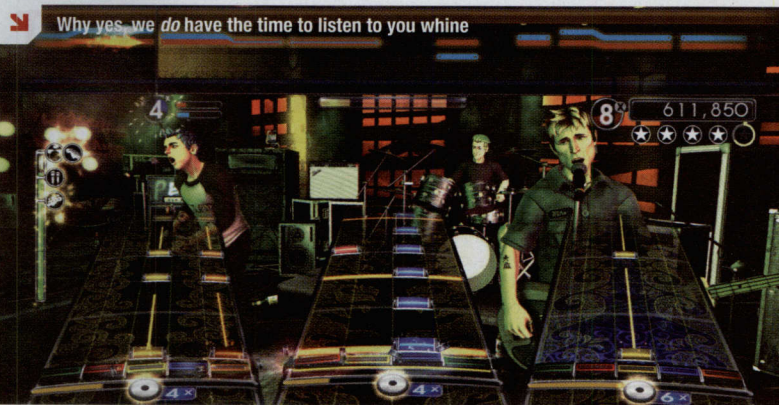
Riding the wave of good favour that followed *The Beatles: Rock Band* – which impressed critics and fans alike – comes Harmonix's second fully-fledged single band title.

We won't count *AC/DC Live: Rock Band* because AC/DC themselves didn't actually make an appearance.

It doesn't quite rise to the same LSD-fuelled heights as its predecessor, but it's a good package. Easily the equal of, say, the impressive *Guitar Hero: Metallica*.

Green Day: Rock Band recreates the band members faithfully and includes a solid cross section of their catalogue. There's nothing here from before 1994, but there is 47 tracks spanning the 16 years from their breakthrough album *Dookie* to their most recent album *21st Century Breakdown*. *Green Day: Rock Band* provides both of those albums in their entirety (assuming you've already sprung for the six downloadable *21st Century Breakdown* songs available for the original *Rock Band* and *Rock Band 2*), plus all of American Idiot. The rest of the tracklist is made up of cuts from *Insomniac*, *Warning* and *Nimrod*.

Most of the tracks are fun to play along with. The drumming in particular is more energetic than *The Beatles: Rock Band*, and unlike the



latter it features fills. Harmonix does well to imbue the performances with a nice live feel also. Launch into 'Brain Stew' / 'Jaded' and the crowd will explode in the silence between the guitar grinds during the intro.

Some of the artistic variety from the clips in *The Beatles: Rock Band* wouldn't have gone astray though, as there's only three venues including here and the performances quickly begin to feel a little samey.

Still, 47 tracks – all by Green Day – that you can export to your PS3 to play in regular *Rock Band* isn't bad value. It's almost half the price of the \$89.95 *Guitar Hero: Van Halen*, which supplements its 25 Van Halen songs with 19 guest acts – and isn't exportable.

It's simple really. If you're not into Green Day – and honestly, we're surprised you've read this far – you'll likely feel it's a load of dookie. If you are, however, welcome to paradise.

— Luke Reilly

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

Faithful trimmings, but we'd have liked more zest.

SOUND

Good quality tunes, decent live effects.

CONTROLS

Rock Band as you expect it, with vocal harmonies.

REPLAY VALUE

Exporting the tracks will give the songs a longer life.

VERDICT

Doesn't surprise, but it's robust and fun to play. Green Day fans will adore it.

8

“Its manifesto is pure but its execution is to be denounced”

The game refers to the souls of demons as demon's souls, demons souls and demon souls. Confused? Us too

INFO

FORMAT: PS3 | GENRE: RPG | RELEASE: NOW | DISTRIBUTOR: NAMCO BANDAI PARTNERS
DEVELOPER: FROM SOFTWARE | PLAYERS: 1 | RRP: \$89.95

DEMON'S SOULS

Or, How You Came To Learn To Die

You might already know about *Demon's Souls* – or as we call it, the Hardest Game That Ever Existed – due to the underground rumblings about its legendary difficulty. Released in Japan in February last year, then eight months later in the US, it quickly gained reputation as being 'old school'; a game only for hardcore RPG lovers who were sick of having their hand held by modern game design, and being a pure example of man versus the machine.

Whether you see these as positive attributes or not depends on your gaming habits, and whether you can stomach dying and learning from your mistakes the hard way, over and over again.

Demon's Souls demands your time, patience and wits. After picking your character class and moulding your physical features, you're off into the dungeons, weapon in hand to fight the monsters and mad men throughout. Getting from the start of a level to the end is more like a marathon than a sprint; dive in sword flailing and you'll run out of stamina, leaving yourself wide open to a counter attack and unable to land a killer blow. When you die – most certainly a matter of time, in our case roughly 10 minutes in – you'll be booted to the Nexus in order to try and earn your body back.

While you're dead, you'll continue on in your soul form with a reduced health bar as you try to conquer the underworld to try to get back to your body. Cutting down enemies earns souls, the game's currency that buys you better equipment. Die mid-level (whilst you're dead) and all the souls that you've collected from this stage will be left in a bloody splotch. Get back to it and your stash is replenished. Die again before reaching that bloodstain – likely, as all the stage's enemies have been reset – and your hard work is for naught.

In other games this wouldn't be so much of an issue, but 21st Century standards such as midlevel checkpoints and an inventory system that halts the action so you can equip yourself are eschewed in favour of, well, death. You can't even pause the game, so if you're in for this you're in for the long haul, hours at a time.

Its manifesto is pure but its execution is to be denounced. While you're going to get a sense of achievement out of this, getting there is barely worth your while. The majority of gamers will feel frustrated and unfairly punished by how hard this is, and it'll take a fanatic to love its appearance. Patience may be a virtue, but fun is far more critical. You have been warned. **Paul Taylor**

WORSE THAN

DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS



BETTER THAN

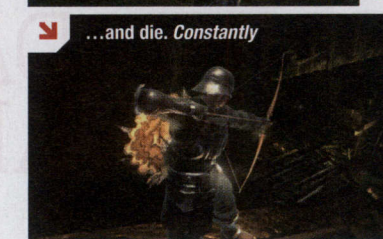
WHITE KNIGHT CHRONICLES



Get ready to die...



...and die...



...and die. Constantly

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

Grand environments in scope and design, plus the weapons have been lovingly created. Animation's a bit off, though.

SOUND

Suitable clangs and death screams, plus the voice acting is more than passable despite a touch of English.

CONTROLS

It really needs a 'pause' option, and the combat will take a long while to get used to. That evasive roll looks particularly painful, too.

REPLAY VALUE

High, but to re-play you've got to finish it first. Plenty of character classes to keep you tinkering.

VERDICT: Although RPG lovers have probably already imported this, those looking for an extreme challenge may just meet their match here.

7

OUT OF BODY EXPERIENCE

Your time in the dungeons isn't a solitary one. While you can play in offline mode, you'll miss out on important info dropped by players who have travelled down the same path in the past. You're able to leave notes in particularly tough spots to help anyone who wants to read them – damn useful. Or, you could be a bit cheeky and leave them a message that guides them over a ledge to their doom – damn you.



He was a lot scarier in *Jurassic Park*

TOY STORY 3

You are a child's plaything!

INFO

FORMAT: PS3
GENRE: ADVENTURE
RELEASE: NOW
DISTRIBUTOR: THQ
DEVELOPER: AVALANCHE SOFTWARE
PLAYERS: 1-2
RRP: \$89.95

Avalanche Software is not Avalanche Studios. The latter made *Just Cause 2*. The former made one of our most hated games of all time: the PS2's pig-awful *25 To Life*.

We were unwilling, then, to be overly optimistic about *Toy Story 3* – even though (to be fair) Avalanche does have some accomplished platformers under its belt like the *Tak* series and the surprisingly swell *Chicken Little: Ace in Action* spin-off.

The result of our mild cynicism is pleasant surprise. *Toy Story 3* is quite enjoyable, and it looks wonderful.

A platformer, *Toy Story 3* allows you to

play as either Sheriff Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Jessie or Emperor Zurg (who is exclusive to the PS3 version, and has his own unique missions). Unexpectedly, each character has different strengths and sometimes you'll need to switch between them to complete levels. The two-player co-op is certainly a nice touch.

There are two modes. Story mode consists of nine levels and vaguely follows the events of the movie. This can be knocked over in a few hours. In Toybox mode players can create and customise their own levels and fill it with junk. It's a bit like *LittleBigPlanet*-lite; you can populate your world with toys (from Al's Toy Barn) and colour it how you see fit.

Toybox mode is where the game hits its peak, offering open-world style gameplay packed with mini challenges geared towards a generation of kids far too young to be powersliding buses through parked cars and prostitutes in Liberty City.

The game will also feature compatibility with the PlayStation Move motion controller with downloadable mini-games designed specifically for the Move. We'll need to test these at a later date.

The biggest problem is depth and some unrefined controls. Are the charming and colourful visuals alone enough to offset these? Depending on the audience, maybe. At the very least, *Toy Story 3* is arguably better than it needed to be. **Luke Reilly**

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION
 Looks an absolute treat.

SOUND

The original music from the films suits perfectly.

CONTROLS

A bit finicky at times.

REPLAY VALUE

May get a second wind when PS Move is released.

VERDICT

Cute, simple and better than we thought it might have been. A better Pixar adaptation than most.

7

WORLD OF OUTLAWS: SPRINT CARS

They tryin' to catch us ridin' dirty



INFO

FORMAT: PS3
GENRE: RACING
RELEASE: NOW
DISTRIBUTOR: THQ
DEVELOPER: BIG ANT
PLAYERS: 1-8
RRP: \$49.95

Sprint cars. For some, they're a way of life. For most, however, they're a motorsport spectacle wedged somewhere between monster trucks and dunno derbies. When it comes to racing in Aus, V8 Supercars has things pretty much stitched up.

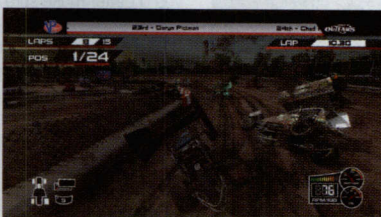
An odd release then, this one. We'd have thought that word-of-mouth amongst true sprint car tragics would've revealed to them that *World of Outlaws: Sprint Cars* has been available on the US PlayStation Store for some months now – and for (notwithstanding a catastrophic drop in the Aussie dollar between now and the time you read this) a more attractive price. We'd have thought they'd already have it. But we've been wrong before.

World of Outlaws: Sprint Cars, from local Melbourne studio Big Ant, is the latest in a handful of sprint car and short track titles made by the developer. In short, it's a basic, budget racing title.

There is something hypnotic about travelling at high speed in circles. Despite a dated look, *World of Outlaws* does a serviceable job of high speed and circles. Only true sprint car pundits will persist, but in its defence *World of Outlaws* wasn't made for anyone else. They don't make *Cabela* hunting games for whale-watchers.

A warning, however. *World of Outlaws* is harder than a teenage boy snooping in Bras N Things. You'll get to the podium eventually, but you'll likely need abseiling gear to assail the difficulty curve.

Playing *World of Outlaws* you get the feeling the development has taken a back seat to something else. This may well be the case.



Big Ant is currently beaver away on the upcoming PS3 AFL game and, we suspect, at least one other sports title.

We're just not convinced \$49.95 is worth paying for an experience you can replicate by digging up your copy of *V8 Supercars 3*. That had sprint cars in it too. **Luke Reilly**

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION
 Tear offs are cool, but there's not much detail.

SOUND

Rubbish music. Decent engine notes, we guess.

CONTROLS

Significantly tougher than it looks.

REPLAY VALUE

Limited to low. There's online multi though.

VERDICT

As far as budget games go, you can do worse. We can't recommend it widely though.

6

WORSE THAN

GOD OF WAR III



BETTER THAN

LEISURE SUIT LARRY



INFO

FORMAT: PS3 | GENRE: ACTION | RELEASE: NOW | DISTRIBUTOR: NAMCO BANDAI PARTNERS | DEVELOPER: GAME REPUBLIC | PLAYERS: 1-2 | RRP: \$69.95

CLASH OF THE TITANS: THE VIDEOGAME

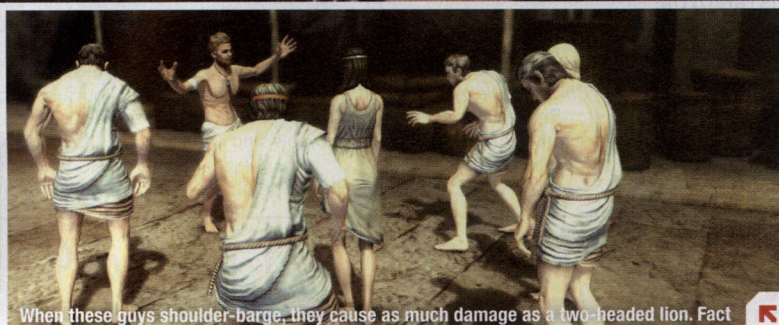
A time of godawful monsters



Burn it



Not-Sam and Wax-Face ponder their next move



When these guys shoulder-barge, they cause as much damage as a two-headed lion. Fact

If you ever have the misfortune to play *Clash of the Titans: The Videogame* for more than 15 minutes, listen very carefully as you do. You'll hear a steady noise, churning in the background. That, readers, is the sound of grinding.

It's the grind of swatting your way through a bombardment of dumb enemy AI falling to the ground with repetitive sound effects. It's the grind of your PS3 as it loads, loads and loads some more. Lastly, it's the sound of your teeth, gnashing together while you endure the first two calamities and several other videogaming tragedies.

There are some genuinely good ideas in *Clash*. There's an amazing amount of sub-weapons to collect, gained by whittling enemies down to their last scrap of health before seizing it from them in a QTE. Their use is limited by the state of your soul meter, the fuel for using them.

Fallen monsters also drop souls that funnel into the meter, but you can't take a weapon

and fill your meter at the same time. Even if you have a particular weapon you will need to seize it again and again, as re-seized weapons and enemy-specific items build up a bank of points that can make it stronger or give some other type of auxiliary benefit.

This clever ecology requires a splash of tactics, as the sub-weapons are far more entertaining and often essential to take down certain foes than the main sword. All of this is wasted effort, though. *Clash* is as painful and dull as it is filled with promises, its failures as equally as absurd and infuriating as the next. Ready?

Enemies are flat-out dumb. On more than a dozen occasions we left Perseus (not voiced by Sam Worthington) standing in front of a foe, completely inert. He stood there for so long, not being attacked, that he sheathed his sword and stared back at the dullard in front of him. It took 18 seconds before anything happened.

Missions are monotonous with goals that can be essentially refined to 'go here, kill that', over and over again. Once you've completed a quest you'd better make sure you save your progress as there is no autosave – you don't want to have to go back and do whatever the hell it was again.

The minimap is profoundly useless, only giving you a point of reference rather than highlighting mission goals. There are tons of loading screens. It loads from the main hub area you're punted back to, as well as breaking to load the next miniscule area, despite it installing a massive wad on your harddrive.

These problems are only part of a long, long list of disappointments. *Clash* would've been passable a decade or so ago, but in the shiny light of 2010 it's unrefined, unfulfilling and diabolically unacceptable. **Paul Taylor**

FINAL SAY:

PRESENTATION

A solid frame rate doesn't compensate frequent loading screens, lifeless facial animations and bogus lip-synching

SOUND

Bold without being beautiful. Generic swords-on-swords effects and pantomime-esque voice acting.

CONTROLS

A three-button mash-athon with very little scope for combos. Perseus feels weightless when he's not fighting.

REPLAY VALUE

Non-existent. If you make it through this 15-hour adventure you'll be begging someone to take it away.

VERDICT

Tedious and in no way streamlined. A poor action game that's lacking in every way.

4



Don't want to play this? Self-immolate, like this lady

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PlayStation®
Network

ESSENTIAL DOWNLOADS

Download this...

KURUSHI FINAL



Good old fashioned – and terrifying – PSone block-rolling gameplay. See why we raved about this PSone original a few months back.

3D COLLECTION



For those on the cusp of new tech, this is essential: *Wipeout HD*, *Pain*, *MotorStorm* demo, and *Super Stardust HD*. Great value.

JOE DANGER



Part platformer, part motorbike game, on a 2D plane. Bright and colourful you'll have people looking over your shoulder while this is on.

LBP HEAVY RAIN COSTUME PACK



We love this for the opportunity it gives us to make our own kooky scenarios using Ethan Mars and a dude in a paper hat.

VOODOO DICE



More block-rocking, brain busting antics in this fiendish puzzler. There's even multiplayer to test your mates.

NEWS

PSN DEVELOPMENTS

What you can expect to see and play on the PSN

One word – Plus. It's the new the premium subscription service that's being offered and it's way to the PSN. It's said to give you extra value and exclusive services and an assortment of other goodies. It's available on June 29, with one-year subscriptions setting you back \$69.95 or 90 days for \$20.95. The most important thing to remember is that it's not compulsory, so you won't have to subscribe to keep playing your games online. Online play remains free. So what do you get out of this you ask? Exclusive game add-ons, avatars, dynamic themes and discounts when you make purchases from the PlayStation store as well as beta trials and demos before anyone else. Watch this space.

Are you ready to have your core rattled by 1.21 gigawatts of pure awesome? Telltale Games, developer of episodic downloadable titles such as *Tales of Monkey Island* and *Sam & Max* is developing a game based on *Back to the Future*. There are no details to speak of yet, but it'll be episodic in nature and available on PSN. All we ask for are hoverboards, and a Trophy titled 'I Hate Manure'.

Telltale is also developing an episodic series based on another Universal Studios property – *Jurassic Park*.

"In the case of *Jurassic Park*, we've wanted to kind of step out and do something that's cinematically much more serious than the kind of... you know, we feel like we're getting pigeonholed a little bit as a company that makes funny cartoon games about talking animals, whereas really what we think of ourselves as is a



company that makes games about cinema," Telltale's Dave Grossman told *Joystiq.com*.

Speaking of fantastic films from our childhoods being turned into PSN games, Paramount Digital Entertainment has announced that it is going to release a game based on the 1986 film *Top Gun*. Based on the film's plot and featuring timeless tunes such as 'Highway to the Danger Zone' and 'Top Gun Anthem' on the soundtrack, you'll play as jet jockey Maverick (presumably writing cheques with your ego your body can't cash). As well as the campaign mode, there'll be a 'Horde' mode where you take on endless waves of enemies, plus there's some online multiplayer modes for up to 16 people (presumably Iceman, Goose, Slider, Viper, Jester, Merlin, Wolfman, Sundown, er, and the rest) feel the need for speed collectively. Prepare yourselves for a target rich environment.



VIDZONE CHANNEL SPOTLIGHT

This month we look at the best songs in the World Cup Anthems



FAT LES - 'VINDALOO'

Liberally taking the piss out of The Verve's video for their hit 'Bittersweet Symphony', there's about three lyrics in here: 'na', 'vindaloo' and 'England'.



FATBOY SLIM - 'RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW'

One of the best videos ever made, we dare you to listen without nodding your head or tapping your foot.



PAVAROTTI - 'NESSUN DORMA'

Everyone knows this song, and there isn't a man or woman alive who won't feel goosebumps during the climax.

VIDZONE

VidZone is the largest online music video VOD service in the world, and it's available free on PS3. Download the vidzone application and you'll have access to over 13,000 music videos at the push of a button!

WHAT IS PSN?

The PlayStation Network (PSN) is free to join and free to play. No subscription is required to play online. You'll be able to communicate with friends, access the PlayStation Store and download demos, add-ons, trailers, PSN games, PSone classics and blockbuster movies!



PlayStation®
Network

DLC

RED DEAD REDEMPTION

Saddle up. Again

We don't really need to justify this for *Red Dead* players, as they should have this free DLC by now. If you still haven't bought one the biggest and best PS3 titles yet, open your wallets as it just got bigger. And better.

Outlaws To The End is a co-op expansion pack that allows for up to four duded-up hombres to tackle six new missions. It mightn't sound like a lot, but they've been imbued with a bunch of options to give them a bit more life. Also, expect to them to be heavily skewed towards 'action' rather than 'exposition', as you break a siege, dodge Gatling gun-fire as you steal a cart full of gold, and four others that we won't spoil.

Cleverly, you're not just four Martson clones. At the start of a mission you can choose from four different classes, and while people are going to have their favourites it's wise to come prepared with a few different skills. After all, the A-Team didn't have four B.A. Baracuses. While they can be broadly defined as being close quarters, mid-range, long-range and all-rounder, each class has a trump that comes in useful. Should you die mid-level, you team mates have



opportunity to revive you.

Clear all missions and it'll loop back to the start but with tougher AI and expert targeting forced on. Do well during a mission and you'll be rewarded with medals and XP bonuses, unlocking better weapons load-outs. Sweet!



VERDICT:

Look, it's free content for one of the best PS3 games this year. Get your mates, get involved. You'll love it.

INFO

GENRE:
ACTION
RELEASE:
NOW
DISTRIBUTOR:
ROCKSTAR
DEVELOPER:
ROCKSTAR SAN
DIEGO
PLAYERS:
1-4
RRP:
FREE



DLC

SKATE 3 MALOOF MONEY CUP

Is it all ker-ching or no sale?

Billed as "the world's greatest skateboarding event" – by whom, we're not sure – the real Maloof Money Cup is being held in New York City this year. Like the real thing, this well-priced DLC is a combined vert and street contest, and in-game you'll battle pro skaters in a bunch of new challenges.

In the street contest you'll flex your grinding and manual skills to try and set a high score, and also nail the best trick possible within a time limit. Beyond that, there's a new vert area littered with rails and stairs to either grind or clear, and while the verts are small they encourage transitions.

Out of the vert park there's a long straightaway with equally spaced dips. They



look cool, and it's satisfying ollieing in and out of them, but it needs something more to keep your attention here. Nearby is another long stretch with plant boxes and ramps, so if you have friends to skate with there's opportunity to set challenges. Creators will be pleased with new items.

VERDICT:

Worth it, especially with mates. The main challenge won't keep you for too long, but this is a fun addition.

INFO

GENRE:
SPORT
RELEASE:
NOW
DISTRIBUTOR:
EA
DEVELOPER:
BLACK BOX
PLAYERS:
1-6
RRP:
\$6.95



BEST GAMES TO PLAY ONLINE

Enemy AI making you yawn? Feel like conquering the world? Take your skills online with this quintet of fantastic multiplayer titles. These offer the best bang for your buck!



MODERN WARFARE 2

You can't argue with numbers. There are a tonne of competitors online, plus the DLC adds to the abundant options available.



RED DEAD REDEMPTION

The connection issues are fixed, so there's no excuse not to jump on, form a posse and start hunting for challenges.



SUPER STREET FIGHTER IV

It's like being in the arcades (remember those?) when you had a posse hanging around. Golden rule: winner stays on.



FIFA 10

Shooters aren't the only games that need explicit tactics, and the beautiful game is quietly brilliant with 10 versus 10 matches.



BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY 2

You'll be won over by the chaotic destruction and storming in to an enemy base on the back of a quad bike. You'll stay for the tactics.



MULTIPLAYER

BLUR

A brand new way to smash your mates

INFO

GENRE:
RACING
RELEASE:
NOW
DISTRIBUTOR:
ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER:
BIZARRE
CREATIONS
PLAYERS:
1-20
RRP:
\$89.95

Well, this is a pickle. Assuming you've read our review on page 73, you'll know how we feel about the guts of the game itself. Offline is a bore, but online in the right circumstances can lead to some of the most thrilling matches we've ever played.

Blur's competitive spirit can be broken down into two parts. First, the in-game powerups that, in close races of eight or so participants, can make things much tighter – or ward off racers nipping at your heels.

Second, the mod system that operates a lot like *Modern Warfare 2*'s perks. It takes a while to see its potential – you're going to spend a good afternoon working your way up to a level 11 rank where your options only just start to get interesting – but once you hit the mid-to-late-teen levels there's more mods to play with and consider.

Mods can let you take a limited amount of damage, convert hits taken into usable powerups, increase your physical ramming power, get back on the track faster after being wrecked, and more; consider that you can only equip three, one from each separate group, and you have to really think about what you're going



to take into each match based not only on the track but also the amount of racers.

While the game is undeniably a hoot with a field of 10 or less, with 14 or more it's generally too chaotic regardless of whether you know the track or not. It's entirely possible that you're just going to be pelted with a barrage of homing missiles (one or two at a time is fine, four isn't) and unblockable attacks like the lightning strike.

Sure, you can steam ahead if your car's powerful enough, but you're going to have to be a number of levels higher than your opponents. At best that's a cheap-and-dumb tactic; at worst it feels unfair. Solution? Really nail the opening stretch and first tight corner. As we said earlier, winning becomes a lottery, and the advantage of owning a fast car won't last forever. Sooner or later either everyone's going to get the hot motors or just give up trying.

There is more than just power-up infused racing but these matches won't hold your attention for as long as the 'normal' leagues. The number of players usually found outside the every-racer-for-themselves modes are usually way lower. However, convince a few mates to team up with you, and you'll find the Team



Racing mode quite rewarding.

If you can keep it in the sweet spot of nine-to-12 racers you'll forgive *Blur*'s bogus car handling and just revel in the joy of knowing you picked the right tools for the job, especially when the higher-level mods open up. However, we wonder just how many people will be playing this in six months to a year's time – the new *Driver* and *Need For Speed* are going to really have to suck hard to not poach from *Blur*'s field.

VERDICT:

Fun while it lasts and heart pounding at times, it's still unlikely you're going to keep playing this past Christmas.



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Original creator:
xX_CRAZY_CAT_Xx



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Original creator:
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epilardus



CLANK
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Dalekwho



BATMAN
Original creator:
Hobbitspwnyou



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Original creator:
derkyderk



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Original creator:
Cill_Bharrog



JOHN MARSTON
Original creator:
Dysandelus



FRED FLINTSTONE
Original creator:
oDarkAngel



LARA CROFT
Original creator:
j0hnNyb0y209



AUSTIN POWERS
Original creator:
GeneralZod

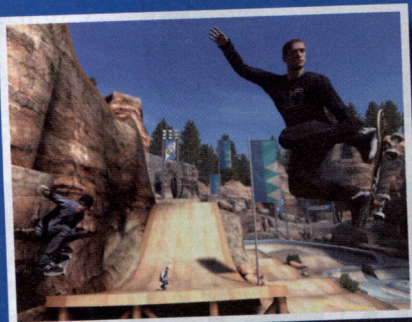


VENOM
Original creator:
NyghtKrawler



TROPHY HUNTER

Looking for gold, silver, and bronze in your favourite titles? Here are three to grab in *Skate 3*



DECK PEDDLER

Sell one million boards? No worries! We found that on average you sell roughly 10,000 boards per challenge completed. So you'll scoop this sweet, sweet golden trophy when you're about two thirds of the way through the challenges. If you lack patience, go back and kill some challenges and you may get this quicker. Or get stuck in the process.

**MR. MONOPOLY**

Original creator:
Jason_Nguyen25

**ALICE COOPER**

Original creator:
SithlordEvil

**STRONG BAD**

Original creator:
grimmpsychonaut

**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG**

Original creator:
Crazy-Face-Jay

**SLY COOPER**

Original creator:
Kdawgz0rz

**DARKWING DUCK**

Original creator:
Hlokk

**DARTH VADER**

Original creator:
AngelusRacer

**MASTER CHIEF**

Original creator:
Rafita91

**THE JOKER**

Original creator:
Gumek

**BORAT**

Original creator:
SUPERMARK007

**SHAUN OF THE DEAD**

Original creator:
WillPalro

**CHUCK NORRIS**

Original creator:
jpeyper

**BAYONETTA**

Original creator:
helloboogie

**ISAAC CLARKE**

Original creator:
tha_con

**INDIANA JONES**

Original creator:
iamwallaman

**ANIMAL**

Original creator:
chb137

**KEVIN BUTLER**

Original creator:
ArtistSpotlight1

**COOKIE MONSTER**

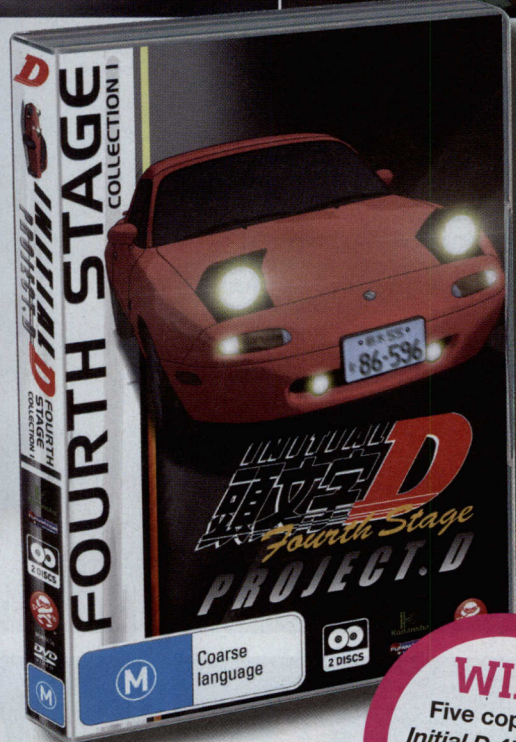
Original creator:
Aldodilly

BEAST UNLEASHED

Once you do sell one million boards, you'll need to win the Monster contest. We had issues on the first ramp to begin with. The trick is to *not* launch off of the first mega-ramp as you'll fly way too high, instead just ride it down and bust out a unique grab with plenty of spin. The rest is easy. More or less. The Super Ultra Mega Park awaits!

DEDICATED

The description for this Trophy reads "everything beaten, everything unlocked, everything earned". This basically means you have to beat all 160 challenges in the game. The quickest way to do it is to go on the map from the start menu and just tick them off in order. Leave the team challenges until last to avoid confusion.

**WIN!**

Five copies of
Initial D 4th Stage
Collection 1
to be given
away!

GET THE DRIFT?

WITNESS PROJECT D'S RISE TO THE TOP!

Nobody drives like Takumi; his instincts, confidence, and downhill expertise make him seem unbeatable. Now that he's joined the Project D racing crew, his reputation precedes him as the team travels the region, facing the competition on its own turf. Every challenger brings a unique style and each course holds its own dangers, but no matter the obstacle in Takumi's headlights, he'll do whatever it takes to put it in the rearview mirror. Because he knows when you're born to race and driven to be the best, it's not enough to be fast – Takumi won't take his eyes off the road until he's faster than everyone else.

Thanks to Madman we've got five copies of *Initial D 4th Stage Collection 1* on DVD to give away. For a chance to win one, just answer the following question and follow our entry instructions on page 28.

Question: What's your favourite Japanese car and why?

**MADMAN**

INTERMISSION

NEW RELEASES ON DVD & BLU-RAY

DIRECTOR: PAUL GREENGRASS | **CAST:** MATT DAMON, AMY RYAN, GREG KINNEAR | **AVAILABLE ON:** DVD/BLU-RAY

GREEN ZONE (M)

Reuniting Matt Damon with Paul Greengrass (director of the second and third Bourne films) *Green Zone* is a fast-paced popcorn action thriller that, while no doubt stretching fact beyond breaking point, entertains thoroughly. It's 2003 and Chief Warrant Officer Roy Miller is leading the hunt for WMDs in now-occupied Iraq. Coming up dry time and again, Miller gets a sniff of a grander conspiracy at work and sets about uncovering the truth behind all his faulty intelligence. It's been described as Bourne-in-Baghdad, and we won't disagree.

VERDICT:

Some American critics believe *Green Zone* is the most anti-American movie ever made. But it's just a movie. The final chase scene is a cracker, by the way.

8

IF YOU
LIKE THIS
TRY...

The Bourne Ultimatum

The last Greengrass/
Damon film



SWINGERS (M)

DIRECTOR: DOUG LIMAN

CAST: VINCE VAUGHN, JON FAVREAU, RON LIVINGSTON, PATRICK VAN HORN, ALEX DESERT, HEATHER GRAHAM

AVAILABLE ON: BLU-RAY

Swingers, a romantic comedy built for guys about the lives of single, unemployed comedians and actors living in LA, is a cult classic – and it's now on Blu-ray.

Swingers was a true career launcher. Star and writer Jon Favreau is now helming the *Iron Man* franchise, director Doug Liman went onto *The Bourne Identity* and Vince Vaughn became a comedy superstar.

What's more interesting, in retrospect, is the effect this small film has had on pop culture. The use of the word 'money' as a blanket term of approval or quality, the exclamation, "Vegas, baby!" and the introduction of the concept of a wingman in its social context can all be traced back to this 1996 hit.

The scene featuring a heated stoush between two friends playing *NHL '94* is just perfect.

VERDICT:

Essential comedy for anyone with a wedding tool between his legs.

10



FAMILY GUY - SEASON 9 (MA15+)

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS

CAST: SETH MCFARLANE, ALEX BORSTEIN, MILA KUNIS, SETH GREEN, ADAM WEST, PATRICK WARBURTON

AVAILABLE ON: DVD

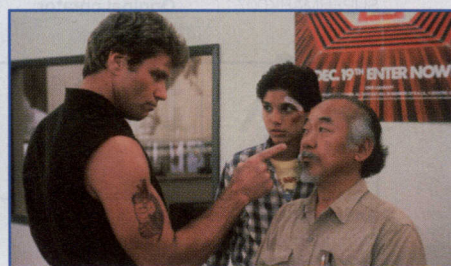
The ninth *Family Guy* DVD release, incorrectly marketed as season nine rather than volume nine (as it is in the US), contains 15 episodes of the hit animated comedy, from episode 10 of season seven through to episode eight of season eight. It remains a hopelessly clumsy way of releasing the show – particularly when compared to the neat and tidy DVD seasons of *The Simpsons* – but it's this or nothing.

This release sees Lois score a gig on Fox News, Stewie kidnapping the cast of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, Peter falling in love with a cardboard cutout of supermodel Kathy Ireland and Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd moving into Cleveland's old house.

VERDICT:

It's on the slide a little, but it's still wonderfully absurd.

8



THE KARATE KID (PG)

DIRECTOR: JOHN G. AVILDSSEN

CAST: RALPH MACCHIO, PAT MORITA, ELISABETH SHUE, MARTIN KOVE, WILLIAM ZABKA

AVAILABLE ON: BLU-RAY

The Karate Kid, from the director of *Rocky*, is a classic coming-of-age story about a bullied kid who comes under the wing of an elderly Medal of Honor-winning, quietly-spoken karate superweapon – Mr. Miyagi. Mr. Miyagi teaches him to fight and win.

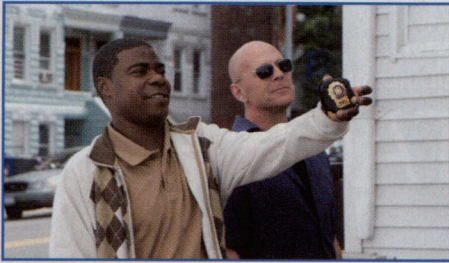
The Karate Kid is an '80s classic and taught an entire generation of kids the world over that with right kind of spunk and a sweet montage you can be better at karate than kids who've been brawling since they were toddlers. This kind of bullshit is dashed when you get older and realise that everything is 1000 times harder than you thought it would be, but it was inspirational at the time.

It's easy to tell why it has made its way to Blu-ray, with the remake in cinemas now.

VERDICT:

Stick with this one over the remake. It's way better, as usual.

8



COP OUT (MA15+)

DIRECTOR: KEVIN SMITH

CAST: BRUCE WILLIS, TRACY MORGAN, SEAN WILLIAM SCOTT, KEVIN POLLAK, MICHELLE TRACHTENBERG, JASON LEE

AVAILABLE ON: DVD/BLU-RAY

Jimmy and Paul, two longtime NYPD partners on the trail of a stolen, rare, mint-condition baseball card, find themselves up against a merciless, memorabilia-obsessed gangster.

The first movie Kevin Smith has directed but not written personally, *Cop Out* is a bit of a dud. What could have been an American *Hot Fuzz* has turned out to be a forgettable flop. The main problem is the tired script, which seems to exist entirely only to spoof classic '80s buddy cop movies but lacks any charm of its own. Seann William Scott steals every scene he's in, but there's no real reason to watch this instead of just digging up the *Lethal Weapon* or *Beverly Hills Cop* series. They're infinitely better.

VERDICT:

It's just not particularly funny. Kevin Smith is funny enough to write his *own* movies.

5



THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY (MA15+)

DIRECTOR: SERGIO LEONE

CAST: CLINT EASTWOOD, LEE VAN CLEEF, ELI WALLACH

AVAILABLE ON: BLU-RAY

The third and final film in the *Dollars* trilogy, following *A Fistful of Dollars* and *For a Few Dollars More* (also now available on Blu-ray), *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is about as classic as Westerns get. The plot simply revolves around three gunslingers competing to find a fortune in buried Confederate gold, but it's the execution that amazes. The masterful direction, the epic score, the barnstorming performances – it's near flawless.

If you're in a bit of a Western mood at the moment – and with *Red Dead Redemption* ruling the charts it seems many of you are – you should pick this up now.

VERDICT:

A real masterpiece. Absolutely crucial viewing for any movie lover.

10



CLASH OF THE TITANS (M)

DIRECTOR: LOUIS LETERRIER

CAST: SAM WORTHINGTON, LIAM NEESON, RALPH FIENNES, GEMMA ARTERTON

AVAILABLE ON: DVD/BLU-RAY

A remake of the 1981 film of the same name, and loosely based upon the Greek myth of Perseus, *Clash of the Titans* is fairly typical big-budget fantasy fare. That is, energetic and eye-catching but dumb as a sack full of squid.

Sam Worthington said it best, however, when he admitted he wanted to make a *Clash of the Titans* film for his nine-year-old nephew's generation. This isn't high art, it's a bunch of men in skirts killing monsters from heavy metal album covers with rubber swords. We're not sure you're supposed to think of it as anything more.

Leterrier's action scenes are a bit too chaotic but at least it's about 100 times better than the game.

VERDICT:

Looks a lot better in 2D rather than hamstrung 3D – we'll say that much

6

Now available to rent or own on **PlayStation®Store**

The PlayStation Network Video Store offers hundreds of titles available to rent or own at the click of a button!

DIRECTOR: JOHN McTIERNAN | **CAST:** BRUCE WILLIS, JEREMY IRONS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON | **AVAILABILITY:** RENT (\$3.99) OWN \$17.99 | **SIZE:** 1562MB (SD)

DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE (MA15+)

Choosing a movie to rent from a list of hundreds is never easy. There are always a few that stand out above the rest, however, and *Die Hard With A Vengeance* is one of them. John McClane is about to have a very, very bad day. A man calling himself Simon (Irons) has begun a reign of terror in Manhattan, threatening to detonate bombs around the city unless Detective McClane cooperates in a game of "Simon Says". McClane, and a local good samaritan called Zeus (Jackson), are soon trapped in a deadly game of riddles. But is there more to this case? Well, yes – but, despite the fact this movie is

15 years old, we won't spoil it here. That way, if you haven't seen it you can still grow a pair and do so.

One of the things we've always liked most about *Die Hard With A Vengeance* is the location itself. The previous two *Die Hard* flicks had been fish-out-of-water stories, with NYPD detective McClane taking care of business well outside his jurisdiction in LA and Washington. *Die Hard With A Vengeance* places McClane in his natural environment – New York City – and the movie benefits greatly. Think fast. Look alive. Die hard.

Yippee-ki-yay, etc.

VERDICT:

A lot of people say the original *Die Hard* is perfect. It most certainly is, without a shadow of a doubt. But this is just as rad.

10

TOP 10 MOVIES ON DEMAND

1. *Invictus*
2. *Ninja Assassin*
3. *2012*
4. *The Twilight Saga: New Moon*
5. *The Invention Of Lying*
6. *It's Complicated*
7. *Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs*
8. *Jennifer's Body*
9. *Planet 51*
10. *Surrogates*

INTERMISSION

NEW RELEASES ON DVD & BLU-RAY

DIRECTORS: TSUNEO TOMINAGA | **CAST:** SHINICHIRO MIKI, TAKEHITO KOYASU, TOMOKASU SEKI | **AVAILABLE ON:** DVD

INITIAL D: FOURTH STAGE - COLLECTION 1 (M)

Launching head-first into a career as an underground street racer, Takumi has joined forces with his former rivals in the 'Red Suns' to form a new 'expeditionary' racing team: Project D. Each new episode brings new challenges, as Takumi & co. glove slap top-tier drift racers on their home turf, employing ludicrously risky techniques to psyche them out and take the lead. While the character designs may look a little sketchy, the CGI animation of the cars is spot-on, and the overall pace is relentless – gripping.

The samurai spirit lives on in these deadpan night riders, and the tension is unbelievable. *Initial D* passes the key test of any form of serial entertainment: at the end of each episode, you're dying to find out what happens next. Addictive as hell.

VERDICT:

Eschewing romantic sub-plots for a higher fuel mix of pure racing insanity, the fourth season of *Initial D* speaks to the rev head inside us all.

9

IF YOU
LIKE THIS
TRY...

The Fast & The Furious

It's live-action illegal street racing



KANON: THE COLLECTION (M)

DIRECTOR: TATSUYA ISHIHARA

CAST: AKEMI SATOU, MARIKO KOUDA, MAYUMI IIZUKA

AVAILABLE ON: DVD

This is an adaptation of a 'visual novel', a type of crude adventure game that's popular in Japan. Typically placing the player in a high school setting, these text-heavy RPGs allow one to interact with a selection of ultra-cute young women, ultimately escalating one's familiarity to the level of carnal knowledge. This is usually represented visually, and graphically.

While this anime series is in no way interactive, it does recreate the characters, settings, and themes of the original, (unfortunately, perhaps) substituting ultra-cuteness for filth.

Seldom before has a show about chicks and effeminate men hanging around and doing nothing been so entertaining. Spoiler: nothing really happens.

VERDICT:

Surprisingly, it works. The comedy is funny, and the voice acting is way above average.

7



TEARS TO TIARA - PART 1 (M)

DIRECTOR: TOMOKI KOBAYASHI

CAST: MAKOTO ISHII, TORU OHKAWA, YUKO GOTO, MAI NAKAHARA

AVAILABLE ON: DVD

Another anime series based on a pornographic video game. There's no sex in this adaptation, but it is still highly exploitative – the vague fantasy setting and sketchy over-arching geopolitical crises that drives the plot have been transparently thrown together as an excuse for a gaggle of impractically-dressed girls (and effeminate men...) to get their moe on.

But here's the thing: it's moreish.

You may sit there mocking the one-dimensional characters and the logical inconsistencies of their misadventures, but once you start watching, it's hard to stop. For want of a better term, this could be called 'The Twilight Effect.'

VERDICT:

Preposterous, yet passable fantasy adventures. Surprisingly watchable.

5



OCEAN WAVES (PG)

DIRECTOR: TOMOMI MOCHIZUKI

CAST: NOBUO TOBITA, TOSHIHIKO SEKI, YUKO SAKAMOTO

AVAILABLE ON: DVD

It's easy to see why this made-for-TV movie is the most obscure of Studio Ghibli's motion pictures. Unlike, say, *Spirited Away* or *Howl's Moving Castle*, it contains no fantasy or supernatural elements, or squeaky clean, pure-hearted romance. Instead, this contemporary high school love triangle drama stars characters that are realistic to a fault. This is not escapism; only a showcase of mistakes, heartache, and crushing failure.

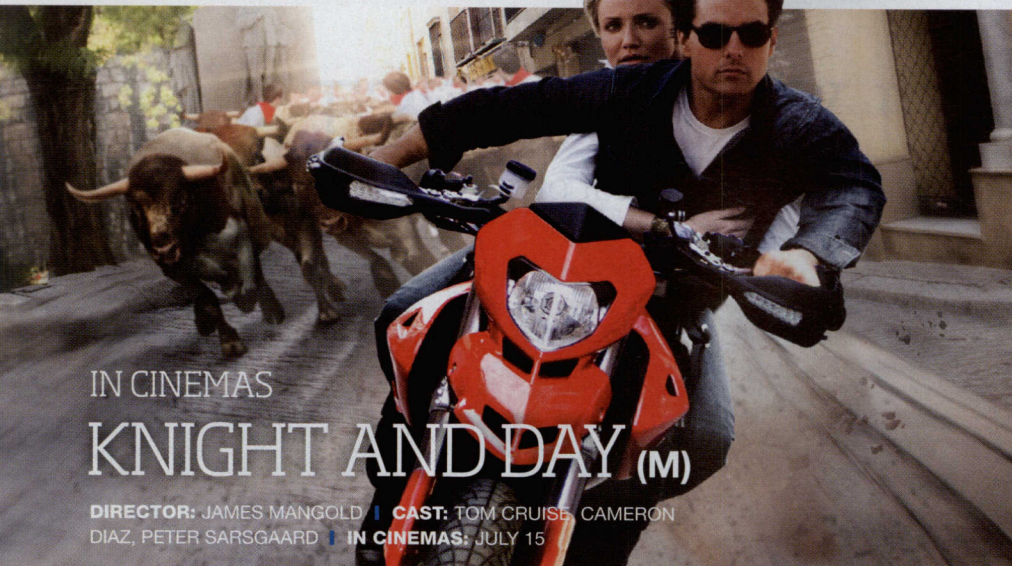
Make no mistake: the animation, direction, and voice acting are great, and the film is more than the sum of its parts. You get drawn into the world, and sympathise with the characters, but this only makes you all the more attuned to their anguish.

This film was an attempt by Studio Ghibli to allow their younger staff to make a film reasonably cheaply, but it ended up both over budget and over schedule.

VERDICT:

Ponderous, and frequently depressing, yet distinctive, and unforgettable.

8



IN CINEMAS KNIGHT AND DAY (M)

DIRECTOR: JAMES MANGOLD | **CAST:** TOM CRUISE, CAMERON DIAZ, PETER SARSGAARD | **IN CINEMAS:** JULY 15

Secret agent Roy Miller (Cruise) is on the run from the government agency he once worked for, whilst trying to protect a kid genius that has made an inexhaustible battery. After a chance encounter with June Havens (Diaz) in an airport, a civilian on her way to Boston, Roy and June must escape the feds and a world-class criminal desperate for the battery. Billed as an action comedy, there's lashings of the former and almost zero of the latter in this truly forgettable flick.

Diaz defaults to full ditz mode, but at times her character bursts into 'Jamie Lee Curtis in *True Lies*' mode, going from pointless baggage to kickarse heroine. It's not her fault, really, just the script. Cruise is

the main attraction here and he's in control and having a good time, all smiles and upbeat intensity. Plus, he's pretty deft at parking a car with a swift handbrake turn.

You're guaranteed a few spectacular fight scenes and car chases throughout *Knight and Day*, even within the first half hour. Towards the end it gets very silly with a motorbike chase that doubles as a bull run, but you can't ever argue that these scenes aren't thrilling.

However, the dialogue is truly inane. We'd take the predictable plot and popcorn mentality if there were impact to go along with it. By the end of *Knight and Day*, though, you won't feel anything for the characters on screen, or come away with any one-liners. Avoid.

ALSO IN CINEMAS

TOY STORY 3 (PG)

DIRECTOR: LEE UNKRICH

CAST: TOM HANKS, TIM ALLEN

We've raved about Pixar in the past, and for good reason: it never puts a foot wrong. Consider that the kids that watched the first two movies have themselves grown up, and this logic weaves into the storyline, as Andy is many years older and is about to go to college. Woody, Buzz and the gang are back for the third time with familiar voices, and while the overall tone is joyful there are moments of real melancholy mixed in with adventure and excitement. See it immediately.

THE RUNAWAYS (MA15+)

DIRECTOR: FLORIA SIGISMONDI

CAST: KRISTEN STEWART, DAKOTA FANNING

Focussing on the blistering Joan Jett (Stewart) and Cherie Currie (Fanning), this rock 'n roll biopic follows the two rockers as they bucked the norm and catapulted into a hedonistic lifestyle. While Fanning seems like an odd choice – isn't she perpetually 12 years old? – her casting is apt as her age matches Currie's age when the band started: a scant 15. Stewart, meanwhile, proves that she won't be type cast as *Twilight*'s Bella and turns up the intensity. Fanning's final performance of 'Cherry Bomb' is one of the movie's highlights.

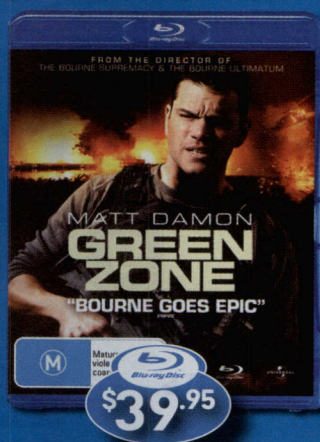
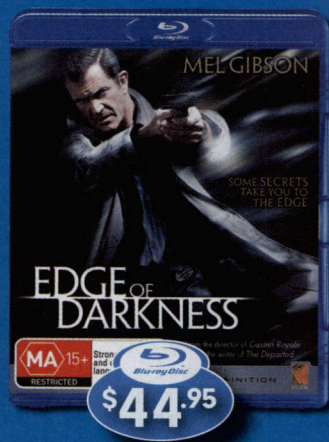
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THE BEST PSN GAMES

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BRAID
DEVELOPER: Hothead
PLAYERS: 1

A charming platformer that incorporates one of last decade's most used mechanics – time manipulation – whilst wrapped up in gorgeous graphics. Incredibly addictive and charming as hell, it's made even better when you discover it was all made by one man. Buy it.



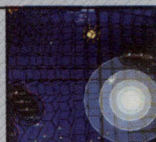
WIPEOUT HD
DEVELOPER: SCE
PLAYERS: 1-8

Yes, it's a HD remix of tracks from the PSP versions, but *HD* is too sublime to ignore. Utterly gorgeous, running at a blistering framerate and handles superbly. Mandatory. We may not have a fully-fledged PS3 version of the series for now, but this will do fine.



EVERYDAY SHOOTER
DEVELOPER: Queasy Games
PLAYERS: 1

Don't be fooled by the sparse art style. This cunningly blends music in with the action that turns it from a dual-stick shooting whimsy into a highly addictive blaster. It's very easy to lose hours and hours to this game as you strive to make it through the tough stages.



FLOWER
DEVELOPER: thatgamecompany
PLAYERS: 1

High concept and totally pretty, it plays like a dream. Guide petals on the wind using the motion-sensing of your DualShock 3. You will be amazed. More than one OPS staffer has lost sleep trapped in this game.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2
DEVELOPER: Capcom
PLAYERS: 1-2

It's by no means 'straight' *Street Fighter*, and nor should it. Stuffed with 56 characters, this three-on-three brawler is a visual and aural explosion. The HD treatment is superbly done. If you're a fighting nut, you should have this already.



BIONIC COMMANDO REARMED
DEVELOPER: GRIN
PLAYERS: 1

Bionic Commando Rearmed is a prime example of what many love about the PSN: being a platform for updates of classics. It's pure gameplay – and rock hard. We don't know why you'd bother playing the recent remake instead.



SIMPLY THE BEST...

The best of the best of the best of the *best*

ADVENTURE



GRAND THEFT AUTO IV

"*GTAIV* is a game 10 out of 10 was designed for – a game that takes your rising, constantly spiralling expectations and vapourises them with a product so sublime you'll tell your grandkids about it."

DEVELOPER: Rockstar North PUBLISHER: Rockstar PLAYERS: 1-16

10



UNCHARTED 2: AMONG THIEVES

"Easily the best PS3 exclusive to date, *Uncharted 2* combines genre-defining visuals, high adventure and cinematic intensity like nothing before. Don't miss the original either. Get both, this second."

DEVELOPER: Naughty Dog
PUBLISHER: Sony
PLAYERS: 1-12

10



RED DEAD REDEMPTION

"Bigger, badder and more epic than *GTAIV*? Yep. If attention to detail, vigilante violence and skinning cougars interests you in the slightest, do not miss *Red Dead Redemption*. Buy it now. You're a daisy if you do."

DEVELOPER: Rockstar San Diego PUBLISHER: Rockstar
PLAYERS: 1-16

9



ASSASSIN'S CREED II

"A far more compelling story than the revolutionary original, there's more to see and do, and more ways of dealing death than before. Ubisoft has tweaked the climbing mechanic to make it feel part puzzler, but all action."

DEVELOPER: Ubisoft
Montreal PUBLISHER: Ubisoft
PLAYERS: 1

9



MGS4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS

"An incredibly layered gaming experience that is almost inexhaustible. One of the best games available on the PlayStation 3, and definitely one of the top exclusives. Buy and play this videogame now. Seriously."

DEVELOPER: Kojima Productions
PUBLISHER: Namco Bandai Partners
PLAYERS: 1-16

10



HEAVY RAIN

"Kudos to Quantic Dream for continuing to evolve its unique brand of gameplay and storytelling. Compelling, different, addictive – *Heavy Rain* is all of these things. This game will appeal to gamers and non-gamers alike. We just need people to stop telling us it's a revolution."

DEVELOPER: Quantic Dream
PUBLISHER: Sony
PLAYERS: 1

8



GOD OF WAR III

"Easily eclipses anything out there and reclaims it's rightful place at the pinnacle of its genre. Believe the hyperbole. *God of War III* deserves an honoured place – both in your own personal collection and the mighty PlayStation Parthenon"

DEVELOPER: Santa Monica Studios PUBLISHER: Sony
PLAYERS: 1

10



JUST CAUSE 2

"Although there are a few technical shortcomings, *Just Cause 2* generates more fun per second than any other open-world title. So much better than the original, Avalanche has crafted one of the most exciting and entertaining open-world romps we've experienced in years."

DEVELOPER: Avalanche
PUBLISHER: Namco Bandai Partners
PLAYERS: 1

9

SHOOTER



BORDERLANDS

"Borderlands starts out great and only gets better from there. It takes the best elements of RPGs and shooters and fuses them, and it's simply the most rewarding co-op to date."

DEVELOPER: Gearbox PUBLISHER: 2K PLAYERS: 1-4

9



KILLZONE 2

"Visually Killzone 2 runs through the competition like a bull in the proverbial china shop. Lucky then, that the game's design and story matches the lofty production values. Killzone 2 is the first-person shooter evolved."

DEVELOPER: Guerrilla
PUBLISHER: Sony
PLAYERS: 1-16

10



BIOSHOCK 2

"Plot-wise, this doesn't match the original. However, the combat has been spliced to near-perfection. A more than worthy sequel that should easily suck you back under for another tumble."

DEVELOPER: 2K Marin
PUBLISHER: 2K
PLAYERS: 1-10

8



MODERN WARFARE 2

"It's almost like three games in one, stuffed with moments that will leave you shocked and breathless with excitement. Superbly crafted, MW2 is, with its older brother, a pinnacle of this generation's games."

DEVELOPER: Infinity Ward PUBLISHER: Activision PLAYERS: 1-18

10



IL-2 STURMOVIK: BIRDS OF PREY

"It's not an FPS, but shooting is all you do – in the skies above Europe. Head-turning attention to detail and intense action. Awesome, actually."

DEVELOPER: Gaijin
Entertainment PUBLISHER:
AIE PLAYERS: 1-16

9



ALIENS VS PREDATOR

"Possibly the greatest movie-inspired game ever. This positively oozes atmosphere and is a must for the fans. Wonderfully visualised, incredibly immersive and true to its inspiration."

DEVELOPER: Rebellion
PUBLISHER: Sega
PLAYERS: 1-4

9



BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY 2

"In almost every way Bad Company 2 technically outclasses the original, but that's to be expected. We just miss the mischief. But maybe that's just us. Even still, this is a top-tier shooter that's more than up to the task of standing side-by-side with MW2."

DEVELOPER: DICE
PUBLISHER: EA
PLAYERS: 1-24

8



GHOSTBUSTERS

"Well-honed and accessible controls, some spectacular visual effects, excellent pace, great level design, incredible attention to detail – all of these essential traits combined with the Ghostbusters universe and come together for a thoroughly addictive experience."

DEVELOPER: Terminal Reality
PUBLISHER: Sony
PLAYERS: 1-4

9



MAG

"You will need to put some hours in before you get to unlock the best goodies, and it's the kind of game that requires fairly frequent attention, but the pay off is one of the singularly most compelling and captivating shooters to date."

DEVELOPER: Zipper Interactive
PUBLISHER: Sony
PLAYERS: 1-256

9

TOP 5 MOST BAFFLING MINI GAMES



TEKKEN BOWLING, TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Once you'd knackered your fingers pitting a bear against a man in clogs you could spend your down time throwing a ball into pins with a pensioner's head on top. Actually, not so crazy.



SKATEBOARDING, METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

So, you spend your days sneaking around an off-shore marine decontamination facility and hiding bodies in storage lockers. Rule the plant in another way, and grind those pigeon-poo coated rails!



TOFU, RESIDENT EVIL 2

Blitz through this and you'd be able to play as a dude called Hunk, who had to escape to a helicopter from the sewers below the city. Then you could do the exact same thing, but as a giant block of tofu.



SMASHING CARS, SUPER STREET FIGHTER IV

Yes, we love this, though it doesn't make any sense. Why would you fight against a car – that's made of metal – and especially a posh-looking motor like this?



THE SHOP, MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2

With 56 characters there was a lot to unlock in MVC2 on PS2. Gone was a 'beat X and unlock Y' scenario, and in its place was a random shop which meant your favourite character could take weeks to unlock. Boo!

THE BEST PSP GAMES

Small system. Big games.

GTA: VICE CITY

STORIES

DEVELOPER:

Rockstar Leeds

PUBLISHER:

Rockstar

PLAYERS: 1



This is about as remarkable as gaming gets on a handheld console. A fully-fledged 3D GTA, on PSP. Also? Phil Collins is in it.

MH: FREEDOM UNITE

DEVELOPER:

Capcom

PUBLISHER: THQ

PLAYERS: 1-4



Monster Hunter is a system seller in native Japan, and it deserves that accolade here. It's an adventure game to lose your life to, and rewards in spades if you're able to put the effort in.

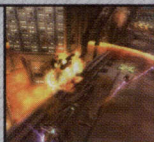
WIPEOUT PULSE

DEVELOPER: SCE

Liverpool

PUBLISHER: Sony

PLAYERS: 1-8



Beautiful, and weighted just right, it's a futurist's dream. Depending on which day of the week you ask us this just pips *Burnout Legends* for best PSP racing game.

GTA: CHINATOWN WARS

DEVELOPER:

Rockstar Leeds

PUBLISHER:

Rockstar

PLAYERS: 1



Hilarious. Violent. Addictive. Yes, it's a port of a DS title, but it's a port done right, and still it rebels against the style of other GTA games. A tightly scripted, mature and entertaining package.

MGS: PORTABLE OPS

DEVELOPER:

Kojima Productions

PUBLISHER:

Mindscape

PLAYERS: 1



As a chapter in an epic story that's kept PlayStation fans rapt for more than a decade, this is essential. As an adventure game in its own right, it's bliss. A fine action title, no matter what.

GOD OF WAR: CHAINS OF OLYMPUS

DEVELOPER:

Ready at Dawn

PUBLISHER: Sony

PLAYERS: 1



With fantastic graphics and tighter-than-hades gameplay, being shrunk to PSP size hasn't made this series any less epic.

RACING



PURE

"Pure shot straight from nowhere to rub *MotorStorm's* face in its glorious graphics and watertight gameplay. It's not as varied as its main competitor, but damn does it play well."

DEVELOPER: Black Rock **PUBLISHER:** Madman **PLAYERS:** 1-16

9



GRAN TURISMO 5: PROLOGUE

"An anemic game package that somehow survives by being what is quite possibly the greatest example of audio-visual excellence on the PlayStation 3 thus far. Well worth checking out."

DEVELOPER: Polyphony Digital **PUBLISHER:** Sony **PLAYERS:** 1-16

8



SPLIT/SECOND

"Split/Second hasn't usurped the arcade racing king (see: the *Burnout* games), but this series debut signals it as a more than worthy adversary. There are plenty of tricks here to tempt you away from *Burnout Paradise*."

DEVELOPER: Black Rock Studios **PUBLISHER:** THQ **PLAYERS:** 1-8

8



COLIN MCRAE: DIRT

"Dirt 2 is snazzy, but it's too boneheaded for its own good, has few real rally cars and very little proper rallying. The original *DIRT* remains a far better example of a next gen rally game. More varied and far less US-centric."

DEVELOPER: Codemasters **PUBLISHER:** Namco Bandai Partners **PLAYERS:** 1-16

9



RACE DRIVER GRID

"This bastard rock n' roll son of V8 Supercars and *Colin McRae: Dirt* is hot. Your lower jaw will relax. Your eyelids will take five. And you'll start to drool. Shame it ditched its roots though, and the V8 DLC Codies promised has vanished."

DEVELOPER: Codemasters **PUBLISHER:** Namco Bandai Partners **PLAYERS:** 1-12

9



NEED FOR SPEED SHIFT

"SHIFT bucks the trend of all-American games, and treats you as an intelligent racer. Whether you want to get under the bonnet and tinker, or even just race with what you're given, this truly is a must-have package. It's also damn pretty and very, very noisy."

DEVELOPER: Black Box **PUBLISHER:** EA **PLAYERS:** 1-8

9



MOTORSTORM

"In our humble opinion *MotorStorm* was the best launch title on the fledgling PS3 – and arguably it's one of the greatest launch titles of all time. Defining next-gen racing as a platform upon which smart AI and terrain deformation could thrive, *MotorStorm* reinvented the arcade racer."

DEVELOPER: Evolution Studios **PUBLISHER:** Sony **PLAYERS:** 1-16

10

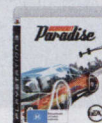


MIDNIGHT CLUB: LOS ANGELES

"Within its niche sub-genre, *MC: LA* reigns supreme. Well designed, rolling objectives, and an insane amount of customisation, *MC: LA* manages to rise above the rabble, easily beating off *Need for Speed Undercover* at its own game."

DEVELOPER: Rockstar San Diego **PUBLISHER:** Rockstar **PLAYERS:** 1-16

7



BURNOUT PARADISE

"You'll lament the thoughtless removal of splitscreen and the lack of a retry button, but you'll marvel at the slick frame rate, the sun drenched city, and Criterion's stellar commitment to free downloadable content. Awesome."

DEVELOPER: Criterion **PUBLISHER:** EA **PLAYERS:** 1-16

9

MUSIC & SPORTS



ROCK BAND 2

"Rock Band 2 is the best music game around. Import *Rock Band* and *LEGO Rock Band* to your hard drive, access the DLC, and you'll have over 1000 songs at your fingertips. You can't fault it."

DEVELOPER: Harmonix PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS: 1-8

10



FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4

"A spectacular game. Deeper and more technical, *Fight Night Round 4* recreates the sweet science more faithfully than ever before. Remarkable detail, incredible animation."

DEVELOPER: EA Canada
PUBLISHER: EA
PLAYERS: 1-2

9



THE BEATLES: ROCK BAND

"From the tunes to screaming hordes of women to psychedelic trips through acid-fueled imaginations, Harmonix nailed it all. A landmark collaboration."

DEVELOPER: Harmonix
PUBLISHER: EA
PLAYERS: 1-4

9



SUPER STREET FIGHTER IV

"With the 'vanilla' version's vibrant look, online mode and pristine gameplay but with a stack of new characters, all unlocked and at a bargain price, *SSFIV* belongs in everyone's collection."

DEVELOPER: Capcom PUBLISHER: THQ PLAYERS: 1-2

10

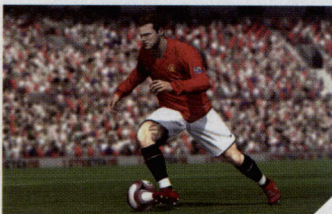


SKATE 2

"Despite some frame rate issues, *SKATE 2* is undoubtedly one of the greatest sports games ever conceived. The controls are flawless, the city is dense, the balance is sublime. Massively addictive."

DEVELOPER: EA Black Box
PUBLISHER: EA
PLAYERS: 1-8

9



FIFA 10

"With its new momentum physics, stellar visuals, and engaging gameplay, 2009 was the year that the *FIFA* franchise managed to leap the perennial hurdle that is *Pro Evolution Soccer*. *FIFA 10* is even better. Buy it, become obsessed."

DEVELOPER: EA Canada
PUBLISHER: EA
PLAYERS: 1-20

9

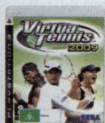


GUITAR HERO METALLICA

"*Guitar Hero Metallica* improves upon *GHWT* in a number ways – a more user-friendly HUD, superior presentation and more attention to detail. Great tracklist too, including 'Tuesday's Gone' by Lynyrd Skynyrd."

DEVELOPER: Neversoft
DISTRIBUTOR: Activision
PLAYERS: 1-4

8

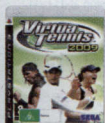


UFC UNDISPUTED 2010

"The new undisputed baron of sports fighting, though its improvements aren't all that radical. But while it hasn't made leaps and bounds on last year's effort, it is a straight jab in the right direction."

DEVELOPER: Yuke's
DISTRIBUTOR: THQ
PLAYERS: 1-2

8



VIRTUA TENNIS 2009

"More of a tweak than a brand new experience, *Virtua Tennis 2009* is still the most enjoyable tennis game available today. Along with player creation tools, the biggest plus is the chance to play in the Davis Cup."

DEVELOPER: Sumo
DISTRIBUTOR: SEGA
PLAYERS: 1-4

8



DJ HERO

"A real surprise package, and tough to write off as a gimmick once you've played it. Utterly addictive, and great value when you consider it's chock full of great mixes you'll never hear anywhere else. An excellent game, and great for parties."

DEVELOPER: Freestyle Games
DISTRIBUTOR: Activision
PLAYERS: 1-2

9

MAGIC MOMENTS

THE GAME:

QUAKE II

CONSOLE: PlayStation
YEAR: 1999



THE MOMENT:

It's rare that the PC market gets a game ahead of their console counterparts in the 21st Century. Despite an arrogant sentiment of 'shooters are better on PC' from many PC gamers, consoles make the playing field fair; everyone has the same hardware, and cheaters are only a small concern.

Back in the mid-to-late '90s, PCs were the place to go for a selection of cutting-edge gameplay experiences you just wouldn't get anywhere else, be it because of the hardware requirements, the customers who were only available on that platform, or perceived traits of console owners by developers.

Remember, we said 'were'.

The port of *Quake II* from PC to PlayStation took nearly two years to happen, and a few technical concessions were made. A few extra corridors were thrown in to make loading times more palatable, and a few enemy types were missing. But it was freaking *Quake II*, man, and it was happening on your console – the little box that wasn't meant to do it like PCs could.

Quake's brand name had a lot of cred, thanks to the halo effect of its creators, id. These are the guys who essentially gave birth to the shooter genre with *Wolfenstein 3D*. *Quake II* was a technically important game, but this was the moment that PlayStation owners could walk up to their PC brethren and know that they weren't missing out. Booting up *Quake II* was the moment when it became clear games were definitely for the masses and not just those that poured hundreds and hundreds of dollars into upgrading – and had a keyboard and mouse.

It's changed, now. EA's Greg Goodrich, who is part of the team making the new *Medal of Honor*, has said that the PS3 is their lead platform. Extreme kudos for a one-size-fits-all box.



THE BEST PSone GAMES

on PlayStation Store

FINAL FANTASY VII
DEVELOPER:
Square
PLAYERS: 1



The RPG upon which all other RPGs are generally judged, *Final Fantasy VII* is a modern classic and a worthy part of any credible videogame library.

DRIVER
DEVELOPER:
Reflections Interactive
(now Ubisoft Reflections)
PLAYERS: 1



The original *Driver* hit PlayStation like a blast of fresh air. Hectic, powerside-heavy car chases through 3D cities may be old hat now, but when *Driver* debuted it was the first of its kind. Essential.

CRASH BANDICOOT 3: WARPED
DEVELOPER:
Naughty Dog
PLAYERS: 1



Crash Bandicoot 3 remains the best pure platformer on a PlayStation console. The *Jak & Daxter* series is unmatched but, as far as old-school run 'n' jump action in purpose-built levels goes, *this* is the zenith.

MEDIEVIL
DEVELOPER: SCE
Studio Cambridge
PLAYERS: 1



It confounds us that the *MediEvil* series has been buried. It was brilliant. Fantasy hack 'n' slash adventure with a sprinkling of the supernatural, *MediEvil* still does it better than many that have come since.

SYPHON FILTER
DEVELOPER:
Eidetic (now Sony Bend)
PLAYERS: 1



Speaking of confounding, where the hell is *Syphon Filter*? We challenge you to play through the original again and tell us *Syphon Filter* doesn't deserve a PS3 comeback!

CRASH TEAM RACING
DEVELOPER:
Naughty Dog
PLAYERS: 1-4



This is kart racing at its finest. *ModNation Racers* is a lot of things – but even *ModNation Racers* doesn't boast the simply brilliant range of tracks that *CTR* does. Must own.

QUICK LIST

- 3D Dot Game Heroes** From Software 7
If you pine for the past this should keep you entertained.
- 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa** EA Canada 7
Blissful, *FIFA 10* football with a World Cup facelift. A bit pricey.
- 50 Cent: Blood on the Sand** Swordfish Studios 7
So dumb it's dangerously good. Better than it sounds.
- AC/DC Live: Rock Band Track Pack** Harmonix 7
Bare-bones stuff, but the music is worth it. Fully exportable.
- Afro Samurai** Namco Bandai 6
Arty presentation, but will probably disappoint fans of the anime.
- RECOMMENDED Aliens vs. Predator** Rebellion Developments 9
Possibly the best movie-inspired title ever. Beyond brutal.
- Alone in the Dark: Inferno** Eden Studios 6
Dead Space this just doesn't cut the mustard. At all.
- Army of Two** EA Montreal 7
Solid co-op thrills make up for its wasted potential.
- Army of Two: The 40th Day** EA Montreal 7
Still dumb, but a lot tighter and more fun than the first.
- Ashes Cricket 2009** Transmission Games 6
Disappointing, but stick through the ugly for multiplayer beauty.
- RECOMMENDED Assassin's Creed** Ubisoft Montreal 10
A landmark. Dated now, but was truly awe-inspiring at the time.
- ESSENTIAL Assassin's Creed II** Ubisoft Montreal 9
When everything goes correctly it casually murders its predecessor.
- Avatar** Ubisoft Montreal 7
If you've got a 3D TV, buy it. If not, it's too topsy to bother.
- Backbreaker** NaturalMotion 7
Great tech. Worth a look to see euphoria at work in sports.
- Baja: Edge of Control 2XL** Games 6
A little bland, but brilliant handling and sound.
- Band Hero** Neversoft 7
Robust, but the over-zealous censorship grates a lot.
- RECOMMENDED Batman: Arkham Asylum** Rocksteady Studios 8
Really delivers the goods. Best Batman game ever.
- Battle Fantasia** Arc System Works 7
A nice curiosity, but seriously, get *Super Street Fighter IV*.
- RECOMMENDED Battlefield: Bad Company** Digital Illusions CE 8
Destructible environments and humour. Together at last.
- RECOMMENDED Battlefield: Bad Company 2** Digital Illusions CE 8
A top tier shooter, but the single-player mischief is M.I.A.
- RECOMMENDED Bayonetta** Platinum Games 9
It takes balls to make a game this violent, sexy and weird.
- RECOMMENDED The Beatles: Rock Band** Harmonix 9
Outstanding. This is a tribute like no other.
- Beijing 2008** Eurocom 5
Not the worst of its type, but far from a game to buy and keep.
- Bionic Commando** GRIIN 7
There are some great moments, but they're few and far between.
- ESSENTIAL BioShock** Irrational Games / 2K Marin 8
14 months too late, but this is grown-up gaming at its best.
- RECOMMENDED BioShock 2** 2K Marin / Digital Extremes / 2K Australia 9
Doesn't match the original's plot but the combat is fantastic.
- BlackSite: Area 51** Midway Studios Austin 5
A pedestrian shooter that needed more time in the lab.
- Bladestorm: The Hundred Years' War** Omega Force 6
Wild, wackier and noisier than anything else on PS3.
- BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger** Arc System Works 8
Wild, wackier and noisier than anything else on PS3.
- Blazing Angels: Squadrons of WWII** Ubisoft Romania 7
A simple aerial blaster. Flawed but fun.
- Blazing Angels 2: Secret Missions of WWII** Ubisoft Romania 6
Solid, varied, but not quite the ace of aces.
- RECOMMENDED Borderlands** Gearbox Software 9
A sprawling galactic adventure. An absolute ripper.
- RECOMMENDED The Bourne Conspiracy** High Moon Studios 7
Great presentation and vibe, samey action. Stylish, superficial.
- RECOMMENDED Brothers in Arms: Hell's Highway** Gearbox Software 8
The most authentic WWII shooter ever made.
- RECOMMENDED Brutal Legend** Double Fine Productions 9
Must play. If God gave rock 'n' roll to us: Tim Schafer is God.
- RECOMMENDED Burnout Paradise** Criterion Games 9
Stunning and sharp, but we miss the dedicated Crash Mode.
- Call of Duty 3** Treyarch 7
Solid but surprisingly unspectacular. Seems rushed.
- ESSENTIAL Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare** Infinity Ward 10
Relentlessly exciting. You'd be insane or a girly man to miss it.
- ESSENTIAL Modern Warfare 2** Infinity Ward 10
Categorically the best shooter of the decade.
- ESSENTIAL Call of Duty: World at War** Treyarch 10
A class act. War at its worst (and best). Plus, Nazi Zombies.
- Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood** Techland 7
A cinematic and action-packed Western shooter.

- RECOMMENDED The Chronicles of Riddick: Assault on Dark Athena** Starbreeze / Tigon Studios 8
Moody and fresh. A must play.
- Civilization Revolution** Firaxis Games 8
Not for everyone, but great fun and shockingly addictive.
- The Club** Bizarre Creations 8
Original, compulsive and fun.
- RECOMMENDED Colin McRae: DIRT** Codemasters 9
Plenty of real rally action, unlike its sequel.
- Colin McRae: DIRT 2** Codemasters 7
Flashy and drives fine, but it's style over substance here.
- Conan** Nihilistic Software 7
A buldog of bloodletting, savage adventure and boobies.
- RECOMMENDED Condemned 2: Bloodshot** Monolith Productions 9
Gripping stuff. We were blown away.
- Conflict: Denied Ops** Pivotal Games 10
A real surprise package, and tough to write off as a gimmick.
- Cross Edge** Compile Heart 3
Every benchmark of excellence has been missed. Offensive.
- Damnation** Blue Omega Entertainment 3
Uninspired level design, broken gameplay. Avoid.
- RECOMMENDED Dante's Inferno** Visceral Games 8
Derivative and simple, but well-produced and very playable.
- Dark Sector** Digital Extremes 7
Solid but hardly perfect.
- Dark Void** Airtight Games 6
Unimpressive graphics, lacklustre sound and dull, dull combat.
- RECOMMENDED The Darkness** Starbreeze Studios 9
Stunning, original and gory as hell.
- RECOMMENDED Darksiders** Vigil Games 8
It'll test your patience but persevere and your satisfaction will swell.
- RECOMMENDED Dead Space** EA Redwood Shores 9
Super tense. The future of survival horror.
- Dead to Rights: Retribution** Volatile Games 6
Fine, but doesn't do enough to stand out. Needs more dog.
- Def Jam: Icon** EA Chicago 8
Pretty and highly kinetic. A bit cumbersome though.
- Devil May Cry 4** Capcom 7
Memorable bosses, but too much backtracking spoils things.
- RECOMMENDED DJ Hero** FreeStyleGames 9
A real surprise package, and tough to write off as a gimmick.
- RECOMMENDED Dragon Age: Origins** BioWare 9
As long as it is enthralling. Essential for patient fantasy freaks.
- Eat Lead: The Return of Matt Hazard** Vicious Cycle Software 6
Great concept and nice parody, but basic one-play stuff.
- ESSENTIAL The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion** Bethesda Game Studios 10
Simply put: awesome.
- The Eye of Judgment** SCE Japan Studio 5
Neat tech, but nobody wants a \$160 card game. Dud.
- EyePet** SCE London Studio 7
Harmless but pointless for adults; kids are the only ones for this.
- F.E.A.R.** Monolith Productions / Day 1 Studios 8
A chilling ride, but the graphics could've been sharper.
- F.E.A.R. 2: Project Origin** Monolith Productions 7
An above-average shooter suffering from a lack of imagination.
- FaceBreaker** EA Canada 7
Great look, but very unbalanced.
- Fairytale Fights** Playlogic Game Factory 7
Quirky and sadistic, but too simplistic for engaging solo play.
- RECOMMENDED Fallout 3** Bethesda Game Studios 9
There's nothing else like it. A flawed masterpiece for the ages.
- Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer** 7 Studios / Visual Concepts 7
Needed to be about eight times longer.
- RECOMMENDED Far Cry 2** Ubisoft Montreal 8
A technical open-world bell-ringer, but the travel time will grate.
- Ferrari Challenge** Eutechnyx 7
Serious and robust but it won't trouble *Gran Turismo 5*.
- ESSENTIAL FIFA 10** EA Canada 9
Buy it. Become obsessed. The best sports game available.
- RECOMMENDED Fight Night Round 4** EA Canada 9
Runs like a dream. Technical and strategic.
- RECOMMENDED Final Fantasy XIII** Square Enix 8
Spellbinding graphics and 50+ hours of action.
- Folklore** Game Republic 8
Original and surprising with moments of genius.
- RECOMMENDED Formula One Championship Edition** SCE Studio Liverpool 9
Looks great, plays great. Good enough to last until *F1 2010*.
- Fracture** Day 1 Studios 7
Altering terrain is a neat twist, but overall it left us wanting.
- Fuel** Asobo Studios 4
Huge, but buggy, boring and undercooked.
- Full Auto 2: Battlelines** Pseudo Interactive 7
Fun but shallow. You'd take *Split/Second* instead these days.
- Genji: Days of the Blade** Game Republic 5
Flashy graphics, giant enemy crabs, piss-poor plodding gameplay.

- RECOMMENDED Ghostbusters: The Video Game** Terminal Reality / Threewave Software 9
Robust, charming and impeccably presented. Fantastic fun.
- The Godfather: The Don's Edition** EA Redwood Shores 6
It made a good PS2 game, but skip this port.
- The Godfather II** EA Redwood Shores 6
Starts as a decent crime caper, but alienates fans of the film.
- ESSENTIAL God of War III** SCE Santa Monica Studio 10
A showcase. Old-fashioned arse-kicking, astonishing visuals.
- RECOMMENDED God of War Collection** SCE Santa Monica Studio / Blueprint Games 9
Age has not diminished its impact. Purchase immediately.
- Golden Axe: Beast Rider** Secret Level 4
Destined for the chopping block. No co-op? Boo!
- Gran Turismo 5 Prologue** Polyphony Digital 8
An appetising taster, but not the full course.
- ESSENTIAL Grand Theft Auto IV** Rockstar North 10
The technical scope and scale of *GTAIV* dwarfs all. Remarkable.
- ESSENTIAL Grand Theft Auto: Episodes From Liberty City** Rockstar North 9
An essential, and often superior, companion to *GTAIV*.
- Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock** Neversoft 9
The last *GH* with a mostly decent soundtrack.
- RECOMMENDED Guitar Hero World Tour** Neversoft 9
Good, but missing crucial elements that make *Rock Band* better.
- Guitar Hero 5** Neversoft 7
Improving, but the tracklist is clearly half paid for by record suits.
- Guitar Hero: Aerosmith** Neversoft 6
Dated, and weak compared to the likes of *GH: Metallica*.
- RECOMMENDED Guitar Hero: Metallica** Neversoft 8
The best *Guitar Hero* game since *Guitar Hero III*.
- Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits** Beenox 7
Great past *GH* tracks with full band support. Why wasn't it DLC?
- Guitar Hero: Van Halen** Underground Development 6
Only buy this cheap: \$90 is an insult. USA *GH5* buyers got it free.
- Hail to the Chimp** Wideload Games 3
Not funny, or enjoyable. Want to lose friends? Play this with them.
- Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince** EA Bright Light Studio 6
Play the first 30 minutes and you've played the whole game.
- Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix** EA UK 6
The chore-like structure will probably bore most.
- Haze** Free Radical Design 6
A flop. Patchy visuals, apostate level design and dismal AI.
- RECOMMENDED Heavenly Sword** Ninja Theory 9
Slick graphics and refined combat. A bit short though.
- RECOMMENDED Heavy Rain** Quantic Dream 8
Not quite a revolution, but clever and well-crafted.
- Hellboy: The Science of Evil** Krome Studios 6
Sluggish and generic. Ordinary on all counts.
- Heroes Over Europe** Transmission Games 7
A little rough, but not bad. IL-2 is much better though.
- RECOMMENDED IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds of Prey** Gaijin Entertainment 8
Head-turning attention to detail. Best flight game on PS3.
- RECOMMENDED infamous** Sucker Punch Productions 9
A superpowered take on the urban crime-fighting sandbox.
- Iron Man** Secret Level 3
Filled to the brim with bugs. Totally substandard.
- John Woo Presents: Stranglehold** Midway Chicago 7
Won't set the world on fire, but packs frantic *Max Payne*-lite fun.
- Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights** Juice Games 7
Stout mechanics, glossy options. Not too deep though.
- ESSENTIAL Just Cause 2** Avalanche Studios 9
Grappling hooks, parachutes, stripper zeppelins. Buy this game.
- Kane & Lynch: Dead Men** IO Interactive 6
A let down. Gets close to greatness before crashing back down.
- Karaoke Revolution** Konami 7
Only for those who dislike drumming and love Rod Stewart.
- Katamari Forever** Namco Bandai 8
Joyfulness, digitally realised. Infectious.
- ESSENTIAL Killzone 2** Guerrilla Games 10
Lives up to the hype. Amazing graphics, hectic action.
- The King of Fighters XII** SNK Playmore 3
Grey, old and well beyond retirement. Irredeemable.
- Lair Factor 5** 5 5
It feels rushed and unfinished. Deeply disappointing.
- Legendary Spark** Unlabeled 4
A rushed mess. Terrible.
- The Legend of Spyro: Dawn of the Dragon** Etranges Libellules 6
Better than most kids games, but still has issues.
- LEGO Batman** Traveller's Tales 7
Sound and faithful, but the formula is getting old.
- RECOMMENDED LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original** Traveller's Tales 9
Happiness and wonder overcame us with this joyous adaptation.
- RECOMMENDED LEGO Rock Band** Harmonix / Traveller's Tales 8
Cute. Fewer tracks than we'd like, but you can export the lot.

Leisure Suit Larry: Box Office Bust Team17 Software 1
An amazing new low for this generation. Worst game ever? Maybe.

ESSENTIAL LittleBigPlanet Media Molecule 10
Innovative and never-ending. It's time to hit the sack!

The Lord of the Rings: Conquest Pandemic Studios 5
It may offer spurts of fun, but it's mediocre in every way.

Lost Planet: Extreme Condition Capcom / K2 LLC 6
A half-arrest port you'd never bother with at this point.

Lost Planet 2 Capcom 7
Slim pickings for solo players but multiplayer buffs may dig it.

Lost: Via Domus Ubisoft Montreal 6
Some solid adventuring, but the voice acting is rubbish.

RECOMMENDED MAG Zipper Interactive 9
Shooter junkies take heed, this is where it's at for online combat.

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance Raven Software 7
Colourful, action-packed, co-op dungeon crawling.

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance 2 Vicarious Visions 7
A compelling romp, but the button-mashing play needs updating.

Medal of Honor: Airborne EA Los Angeles 6
Short and lacks much true innovation. Too many problems.

RECOMMENDED Mercenaries 2: World in Flames Pandemic Studios 8
Weak in many areas, but has fun in spades.

ESSENTIAL Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots Kojima Productions 10
Insane production values. A titan amongst games.

RECOMMENDED Midnight Club: Los Angeles Rockstar San Diego 7
Visually weak at times. Great customisation and seamless racing.

RECOMMENDED Mirror's Edge EA Digital Illusions CE 8
A true original that makes some grand leaps in design.

Mobile Suit Gundam: Target in Sight Namco Bandai Games 3
A rubber Godzilla of a title. What a pipe blocker!

RECOMMENDED ModNation Racers United Front Games 9
An incredible package. Creating is even more fun than racing!

Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe Midway Games 7
A fun game with mass appeal, but not very technical.

MotoGP 09/10 Monumental Games 6
Simulation freaks will want to veer well away.

RECOMMENDED MotorStorm Evolution Studios 10
Fast, hard and dirty. In 2007, it was everything game should be.

MotorStorm: Pacific Rift Evolution Studios 10
Boasts split-screen, but visually it hasn't come on far enough.

MX vs. ATV: Untamed Rainbow Studios 6
Feels like a PS2 port with no next-gen goodness.

MX vs. ATV Reflex Rainbow Studios 7
Motocross freaks will love it. Needed a little more zest though.

RECOMMENDED NBA 2K10 Visual Concepts / Kush Games 8
Excellent, broadcast-level presentation. The FIFA 10 of basketball.

NBA Live 10 EA Canada 8
Nearly as good as NBA 2K10, but you don't need them both.

NBA Street: Homecourt EA Canada 8
Brash, addictive arcade basketball. Instant fun.

Need for Speed: Carbon EA Black Box 8
A bit more Paul Walker than Vin Diesel, but solid.

RECOMMENDED Need for Speed: SHIFT Slightly Mad Studios 9
Superbly presented and a blast to play. Feels fast.

Need for Speed: Undercover EA Black Box 5
Technically faulty, and adds nothing good since *Most Wanted*.

Nier Cavia Unreleased 7
Decent enough, but there are richer experiences elsewhere.

RECOMMENDED Ninja Gaiden Sigma Team Ninja 8
A treasure trove of gaming goodness. And violence.

Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2 Team Ninja 8
A sexy and rock hard title, but the gore's been cut.

Operation Flashpoint: Dragon Rising Codemasters 8
Authentic but niche. Very unforgiving.

RECOMMENDED The Orange Box EA UK / Valve Corporation 9
Portal is worth virtually any asking price alone.

Overlord: Raising Hell 4J Studios / Triumph Studios 7
A bundle of fun, mixing tactics with the juvenile love of chaos.

Overlord II Triumph Studios 7
Refined gameplay and more jokes, but control quirks persist.

RECOMMENDED PES 2010: Pro Evolution Soccer Konami 8
Improvements are welcomed, but still not as classy as FIFA 10.

Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End Eurocom 6
Looks the part, but doesn't feel or play the part.

Planet 51 Pyro Studios 5
Like a dry cracker for dinner. Bland and boring, and no fun.

RECOMMENDED Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands Ubisoft Montreal 8
Worth your time, but better swordplay could've really helped.

Prison Break ZooTify 4
A below-average stealth game cobbled together on the cheap.

RECOMMENDED Prototype Radical Entertainment 8
A simple superhero kill-fest, but a truckload of guilty fun.

RECOMMENDED Pure Black Rock Studios 9
Still one of the best arcade racers on the market.

Quantum of Solace Treyarch 7
Nearly there, but has a few too many faults to get over the line.

RECOMMENDED Race Driver: GRID Codemasters 9
A born-to-rage racing rebel. Good, but lacks *Race Driver* vintage.

RECOMMENDED Ratchet & Clank Future: A Crack in Time Insomniac Games 9
Reinvigorates the genre without reinventing the wheel.

RECOMMENDED Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction Insomniac Games 8
A big, wild, good ol' fashioned adventure.

ESSENTIAL Red Dead Redemption Rockstar San Diego 10
This Western is bigger, badder and more violent than *GTAIV*.

ESSENTIAL Red Faction: Guerrilla Volition, Inc. 9
Huge fun, and the best destruction effects ever.

RECOMMENDED Resident Evil 5 Capcom 9
A grand, bloody adventure, but the inventory system remains bad.

RECOMMENDED Resistance: Fall of Man Insomniac Games 10
A truly fantastic launch title with the best weapons around.

RECOMMENDED Resistance 2 Insomniac Games 9
Fast and furious, and stuffed with action.

Resonance of Fate tri-Ace 6
Deep, but also wordy, clunky and ugly.

Ridge Racer 7 Namco 9
Undiluted arcade racing at its peak. We've moved on though.

RECOMMENDED Rock Band Harmonix 10
The best party game ever, until *Rock Band 2*.

ESSENTIAL Rock Band 2 Harmonix 10
The best music game around, despite MTV's poor treatment of us.

Rogue Warrior Zombie Studios / Rebellion Developments 3
A fiasco. We tried to like it, but it's too short and too terrible.

RECOMMENDED The Saboteur Pandemic Studios 8
Charming and packed with action. Great, unique visual style.

Sacred 2: Fallen Angel Ascaron Entertainment 6
Gigantic, but feels very slapped together.

RECOMMENDED Saints Row 2 Volition, Inc. 9
Puerile, mean-spirited and technically outclassed, if you care.

SBK-X: Superbike World Championship Milestone 7
Inches in front of *MotoGP 09/10*. Purists may still hate on it.

Scene It? Bright Lights! Big Screen! A2M 5
Woefully vanilla compared to the past Xbox 360 versions.

Sega Rally Sega Racing Studio 7
Familiar, old-school arcade fun.

Shawn White Snowboarding Ubisoft Montreal 6
Lacks the fine touch of realism or the excitement of lunacy.

Silent Hill Homecoming Double Helix Games 6
New combat system is good, but lacks the cerebral chills.

The Simpsons Game EA Redwood Shores 8
Short, but the cromulent visuals embiggen the experience.

RECOMMENDED SingStar SCE London Studio 8
Will last as long as the PS3. Have you seen the DLC?

RECOMMENDED Skate EA Black Box 9
A well-balanced masterpiece and true *Tony Hawk* killer.

ESSENTIAL Skate 2 EA Black Box 9
Perfect controls, plus New San Van is the best *Skate* city yet.

RECOMMENDED Skate 3 EA Black Box 8
Better in many ways, although the city isn't as cool as *Skate 2*.

SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs Confrontation Stant Six Games 6
A sturdy, dependable effort that fails to excite.

Soldier of Fortune: Payback Cauldron HQ 6
Serviceable we guess, but the gore has been cut out for us.

Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing Sumo Digital 7
Fun but shallow. Copies from the best but missing crucial spark.

Sonic the Hedgehog Sonic Team 4
There are cheaper ways to get a spare Blu-ray case.

Sonic Unleashed Sonic Team 6
It's the least awful Sonic game in years, if that means anything.

RECOMMENDED Soulcalibur IV Namco Bandai 8
Phenomenal, but will let down those expecting a revolution.

Spider-Man: Web of Shadows Treyarch / Shaba Games 7
Swift and tidy, but not exactly deep.

RECOMMENDED Split/Second Black Rock Studio 8
Doesn't feel as sharp as *Burnout*, but it's a true challenger.

Star Ocean: The Last Hope International Tri-Ace 7
Feels like a cutesy, angst-ridden version of *Star Trek*.

Star Wars: The Force Unleashed LucasArts 7
Plays a good game but fails to use its idea to maximum effect.

Stormrise The Creative Assembly 4
A cack-handed, future war mess. Terrible controls.

RECOMMENDED Street Fighter IV Capcom / Dimps 10
A tight-fisted gut blow of wow, but get *Super Street Fighter IV*.

RECOMMENDED Stuntman: Ignition Paradigm Entertainment 9
The vehicular equivalent of a 10-hour long orgasm.

ESSENTIAL Super Street Fighter IV Capcom / Dimps 10
Features a lion's share of new content for its price. Get it.

SuperCar Challenge Eutechnyx 7
Admirable effort, but feels a little bland despite the exotic cars.

Superstars V8: Next Challenge Milestone 7
An improvement, but it's still more shallow than it thinks it is.

RECOMMENDED Tekken 6 Namco Bandai 8
Easy to play, with the biggest roster ever. Feels a bit old, though.

Terminator Salvation GRIN / Halcyon Games 4
An abysmal failure. Short, and filled with glitches.

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09 EA Tiburon 8
Still the only golf game worth owning.

Time Crisis 4 Nex Entertainment 7
A little bipolar at times. Stick with arcade mode and enjoy.

TimeShift Saber Interactive 6
A solid attempt that doesn't quite reach 88 miles per hour.

TNA Impact! Midway Studios - Los Angeles 6
Good, arcade-style biff, but there's not enough content.

Tom Clancy's EndWar Ubisoft Shanghai 7
The console RTS is here, but it's far from a finished product.

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2 Red Storm Entertainment 8
A tense, realistic shooter. Cool gadgets.

RECOMMENDED Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X. Ubisoft Romania 7
Tight and accessible, but a bit sterile.

RECOMMENDED Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Vegas Ubisoft Montreal 9
Slick, good-looking and utterly engaging. Smart shooting.

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Vegas 2 Ubisoft Montreal 7
Doesn't quite feel as cool as the first one.

RECOMMENDED Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent Ubisoft Shanghai 9
Obsessive and gripping, online and off. Obtain.

Tony Hawk's Project 8 Neversoft 7
No real reason to revisit this post-*Skate* at all.

Tony Hawk's Proving Ground Neversoft 6
Bloated and inconsistent. Pass.

Tony Hawk: RIDE Robomodo 4
Pure frustration made plastic. Sub-par game, ludicrous price.

Top Spin 3 PAM Development 8
Realistic tennis with a steep learning curve.

Transformers: The Game Traveller's Tales 6
Worth one nostalgic night in, but that's it.

Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen Luxoflux 6
A day of underminding fun, but not much more.

Turning Point: Fall of Liberty Spark Unlimited 4
Shesse from start to finish. Great concept, bogus execution.

Turok Propaganda Games 7
The new *Turok* packs bite but it's missing a few teeth.

UFC 2009 Undisputed Yuke's 8
A technical, rewarding fighter that looks bloody unreal.

RECOMMENDED UFC Undisputed 2010 Yuke's 8
The new undisputed baron of sports fighting.

ESSENTIAL Uncharted: Drake's Fortune Naughty Dog 10
Awesome plot, awesome graphics, awesome action. This owns.

ESSENTIAL Uncharted 2: Among Thieves Naughty Dog 10
This is the reason Hollywood is so worried about videogames.

Unreal Tournament 3 Epic Games 8
Fast, twitchy online multiplayer shooting. No split-screen though.

Unlost Legends: Dark Kingdom Sony Online Entertainment 5
Bland hack 'n' slash. No ballads will be sung of this adventure.

Valkyria Chronicles Sega WOW 8
Strategy and RPG heads alike should not miss this game.

Vancouver 2010 Eurocom 6
A handful of events that last one afternoon. Skip it.

Viking: Battle for Asgard The Creative Assembly 7
Slow attacks and weak visuals, but it has its appeal.

RECOMMENDED Virtua Fighter 5 Sega-AM2 8
As hardcore as fighting games get. Deep and balanced.

Virtua Tennis 3 Sega-AM3 8
The best fun four people could have, until *Rock Band*.

RECOMMENDED Virtua Tennis 2009 Sumo Digital 8
The top seed of tennis games made even better.

Wanted: Weapons of Fate GRIN 5
Designed only to appeal to mentally-subnormal 11-year-olds.

RECOMMENDED Warhawk Incognito Entertainment / SCE Santa Monica Studio 9
Rubbishly addictive. Tighter than a bull's arse on fight night.

WET A2M 8
With so much style, who needs substance? Grindhouse fare.

Wheelman Midway Studios - Newcastle / Tigon Studios 6
Rubbish low-speed handling, and underdone throughout.

White Knight Chronicles Level-5 / SCE Japan Studio 6
Doesn't feel like a worthwhile way to spend 30-or-so hours.

Wolfenstein Raven Software / id Software 7
Lacks soul but still delivers Nazi-blasting action.

WWE Legends of WrestleMania Yuke's 6
Gets by on retro charm, but feels ancient.

WWE Smackdown vs. Raw 2010 Yuke's 8
If WWE's your thing, welcome to nirvana.

X-Men Origins: Wolverine Raven Software 7
A head slash 'n' chest beater of a slash 'em up. Repetitive though.

Yakuza 3 Amusement Vision 7
Certainly an acquired taste. Lots to do, but the slow pace grates.

INHOUSE

FEATURED STUDIO:

NAUGHTY DOG

LOCATION: SANTA MONICA, CA, USA
FOUNDED: 1986



NAUGHTY DOG

For those who have been living in a cave for the past 16 years, California-based developer Naughty Dog is one of the biggest players on PlayStation.

Founded by Andy Gavin and Jason Rubin in 1986, Naughty Dog began its days as a garage studio producing dinky little games for the Apple II.

Things took off for Naughty Dog after the studio was able to fend off a financial crisis to scrape together the low-budget *Way of the Warrior* for the 3DO. Naughty Dog presented *Way of the Warrior* to Universal Interactive Studios, which signed them on for the latter and three additional games (which would later become *Crash Bandicoot*, *Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back* and *Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped*).

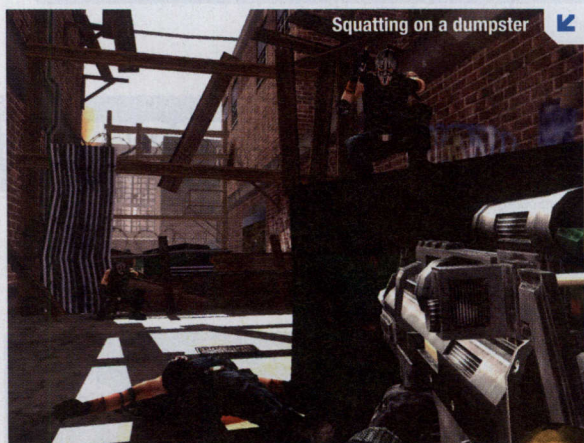
These games, combined with *Crash Team Racing*, sold over 22 million copies worldwide and led to Naughty Dog being the most successful video game developer in the United States for that console generation.

Naughty Dog became a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sony Computer Entertainment in 2001 and moved on from *Crash* to work on the first *Jak & Daxter* title. *Jak & Daxter: The Precursor Legacy* came to life over a number of years and was a huge hit. It was followed by *Jak II*, *Jak 3* and *Jak X: Combat Racing*.

Excited by the potential of the PS3 Naughty Dog chose to explore a more realistic direction. The result was *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune*, an action-packed adventure featuring the most gorgeous visuals in gaming and the best production values we've ever seen. Then came the even better *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves*.

So what's next for Naughty Dog? If past patterns are anything to go by, *Uncharted 3*. Of course, if past patterns are truly anything to go by *Uncharted 3* will be followed by a kart racer.

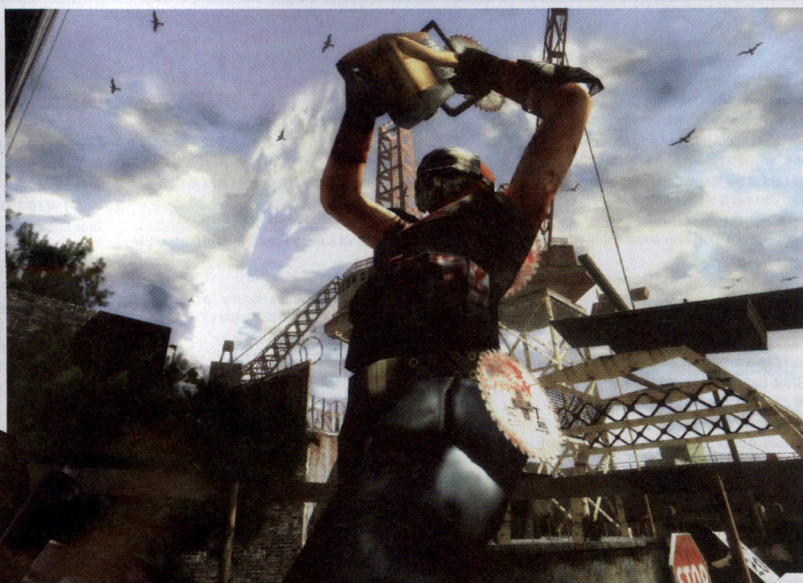
'Unkarded', perhaps? Ahem.



Squatting on a dumpster



The mask says whackjob, but the shotgun says don't mention the mask



We're not sure Workcover would approve of this builder's technique

2006 URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE

We predict a riot

Urban Chaos: Riot Response never had much of a chance.

It was the debut title from an unproven start-up studio. It was a new IP, released well into the last real year of the PS2 and pitched against a large number of already established franchises. Crucially, there was little to no preview campaign, at least one that we were ever aware of. The first time we played this criminally underrated first-person shooter was when it showed up on our desks.

Also of note, it was known by three different names during development. *Urban Chaos* began life as *Roll Call*. Its name was later changed to the significantly more clumsy *Zero Tolerance: City Under Fire* – but only until Eidos received a cease and desist from the developer of the 1994 Mega Drive cult favourite, *Zero Tolerance*. The title was then changed again, to the equally clumsy *Urban Chaos: Riot Response*. If you're wondering how Eidos avoided another cease and desist thanks to the

fact it'd just ripped off another old game title (*Urban Chaos* was already a PC/PSone, title first released in 1999) it's only because Eidos already owned that game.

The result? A game that failed to perform at retail and failed to warrant a sequel. It's a shame it went down that way, however, because *Urban Chaos* was one of the best shooters of last generation.

When we reviewed *Urban Chaos* in May 2006 we heaped generous dollops of praise all over it. We called it a guilty pleasure; the feelgood game of the year. There was a lot to be said about its unpretentious, no-holds-barred violence and the pure satisfaction it delivered. It was justice at the end of a warm gun. It wasn't politically correct, but it was fun. While other developers had begun wrestling with increasingly convoluted ways of justifying bloodshed, *Urban Chaos* kept things simple. The aim was to kill all the bad guys. And that was it.

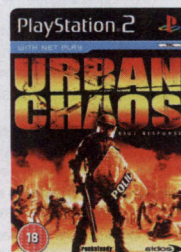
Due to the fact you'd be doing a lot of

killing, the developer was quick to ensure it was wild and fun. Just when we'd let go of the fact Sony had neutered the taser in *Syphon Filter* by removing the ability to set people on fire with it, *Urban Chaos* gave us one that *did* set people on fire. *Urban Chaos* also gave us meat cleavers, circular saws and other weapons of opportunity to even the score, plus a sturdy ballistic shield that was equal parts defensive tool and offensive weapon.

Urban Chaos was a game about details in an era when the small stuff was often ignored. Unlike many ethereal first-person shooters, you'd see your own hands when you climbed ladders or operates valves. In flaming buildings you needed to be on your toes for backdrafts – if a door was shaking and you opened it, a rush of oxygen would surge in and ignite a massive fireball. Just before death you'd often spot a medic working frantically to keep you alive, or a bunch of terrorists stomping you to death. Small visual touches like the progressive damage to your shield, or falling embers, proved the project was not rushed. The developers clearly had time to hone and craft that whole package.

They clearly had talent too. We often feel like we were among the only people not surprised when *Batman: Arkham Asylum* turned out to be very, very good. Rocksteady, the studio behind *Arkham Asylum*, was the developer of *Urban Chaos*. We already knew what they could do.

We've probably seen the last of *Urban Chaos*, but keep watch on these guys. If they ever make another first-person shooter you can bet it'll be brilliant. **Luke Reilly**



INFO

CONSOLE: PLAYSTATION 2
GENRE: SHOOTER
DEVELOPER: ROCKSTEADY STUDIOS
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: ENGLAND
CURRENT APPROXIMATE PRICE: \$15

"FREEZE AND I'LL SHOOT!"

Nick Mason, grizzled cop and not the drummer for Pink Floyd, is a member of an elite counter-terrorism squad, the Zero Tolerance unit – or T-Zero for short. These guys aren't like regular cops. They're like super cops. Super cops with huge guns.

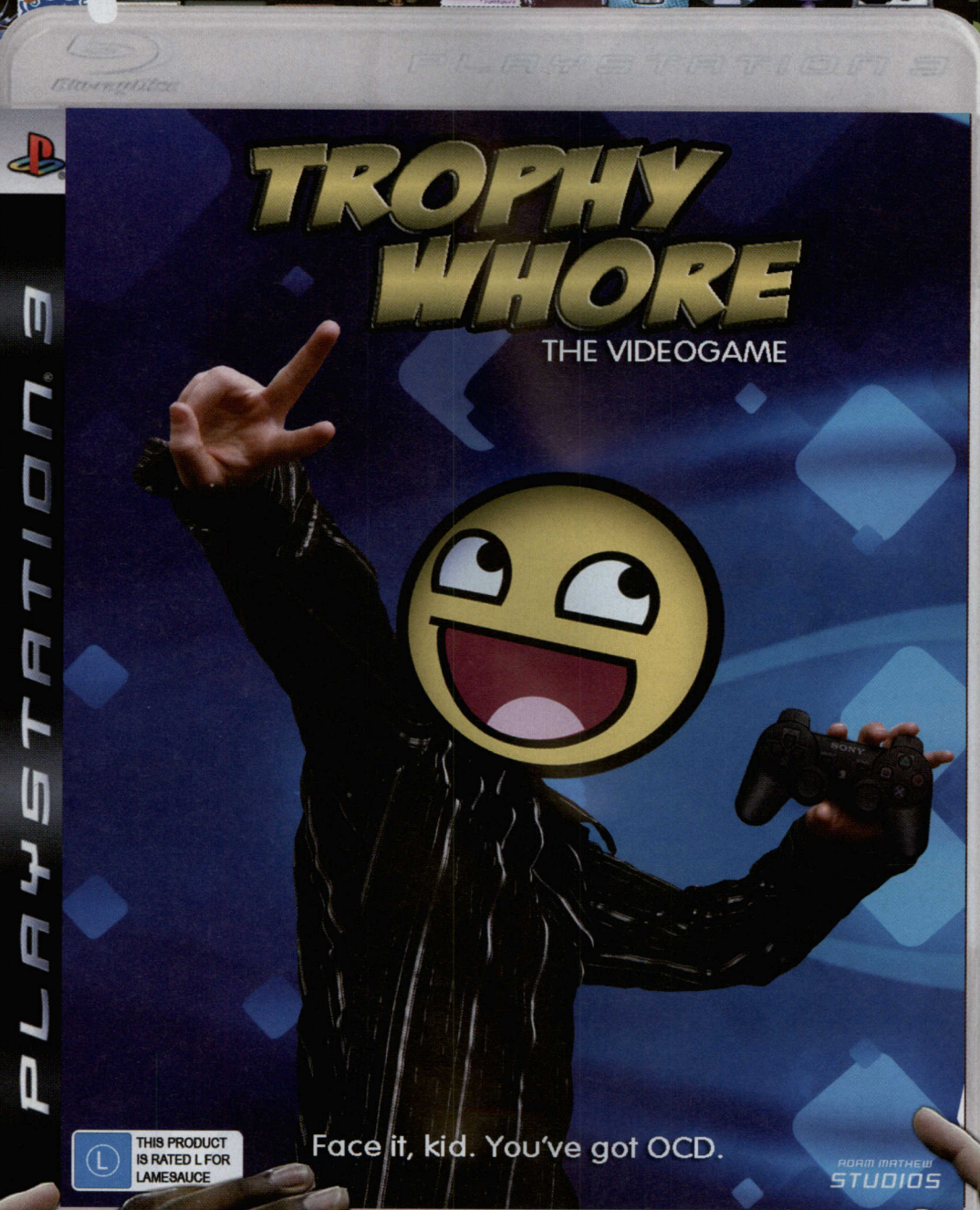
T-Zero has no paperwork, T-Zero has headshot quotas. Get enough headshots and you'll earn a medal. We don't think regular police get medals for that.

When a large gang of dangerous psychopaths called the Burners hit town, T-Zero wades in to clean up the mess. Metaphorically speaking, of course, as you'll actually be creating a large mess of your own. This mess will consist primarily of blood and head fragments, accompanied by a sizable number of bleeding, headless corpses.

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